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THE NEW YORKER

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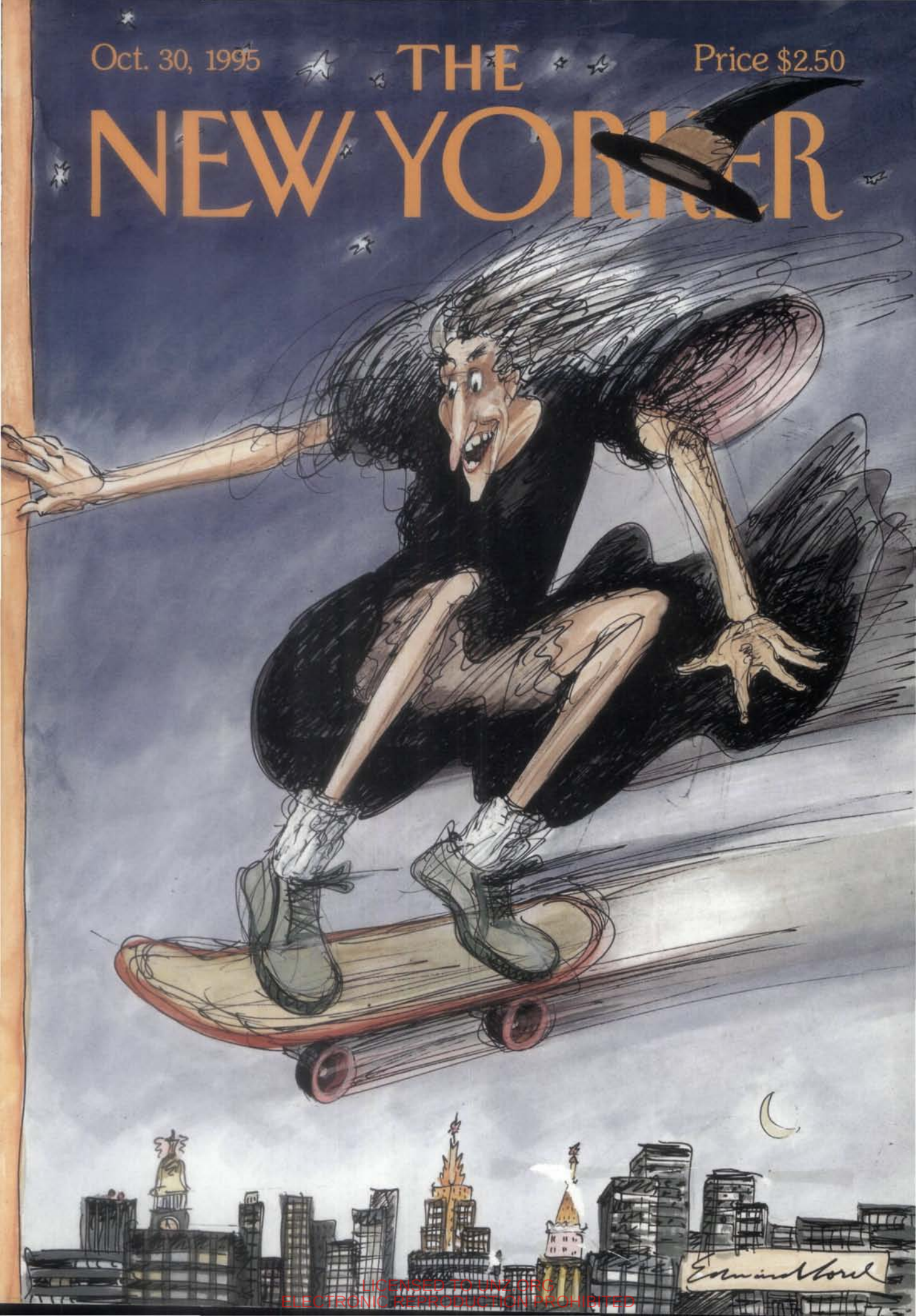

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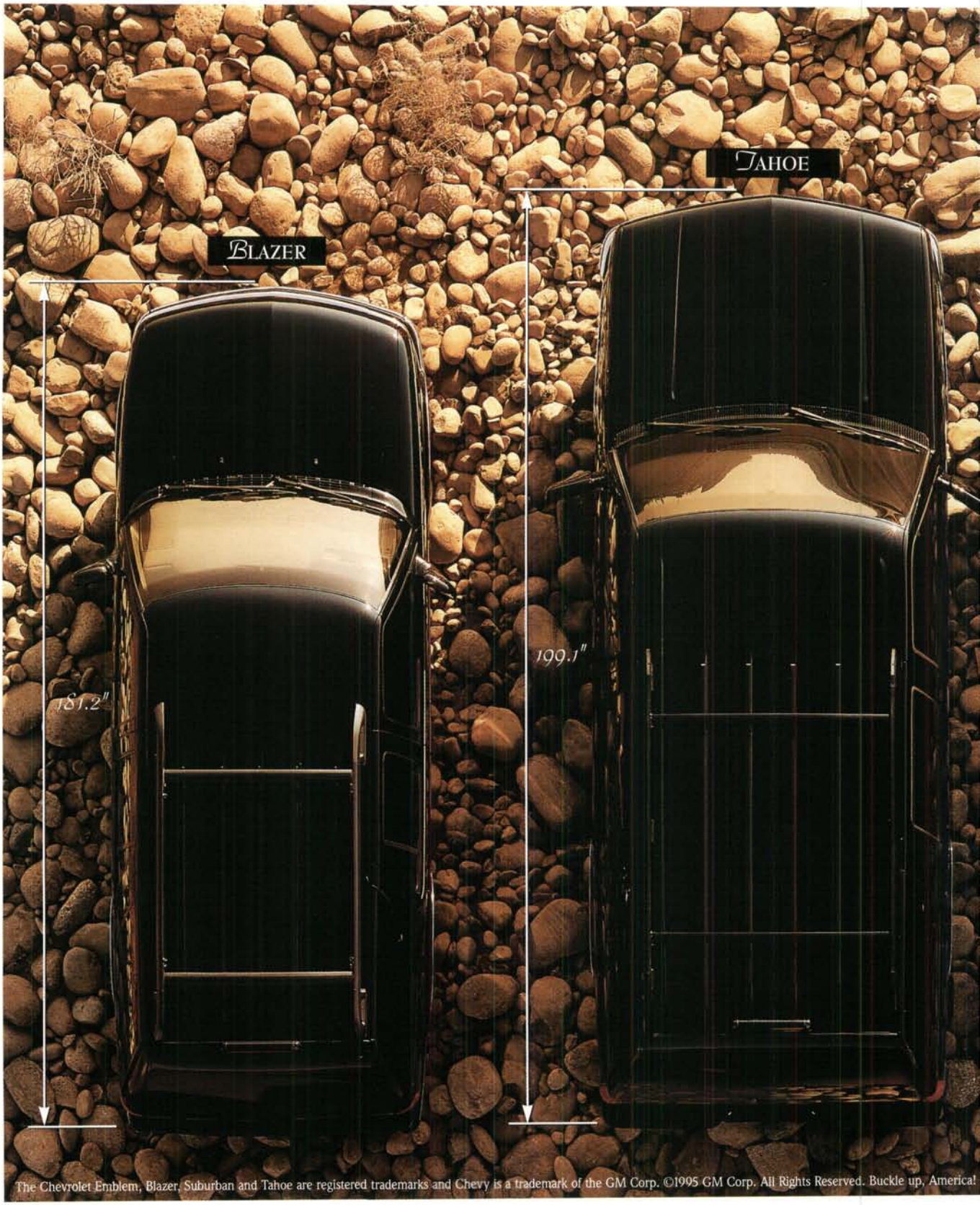

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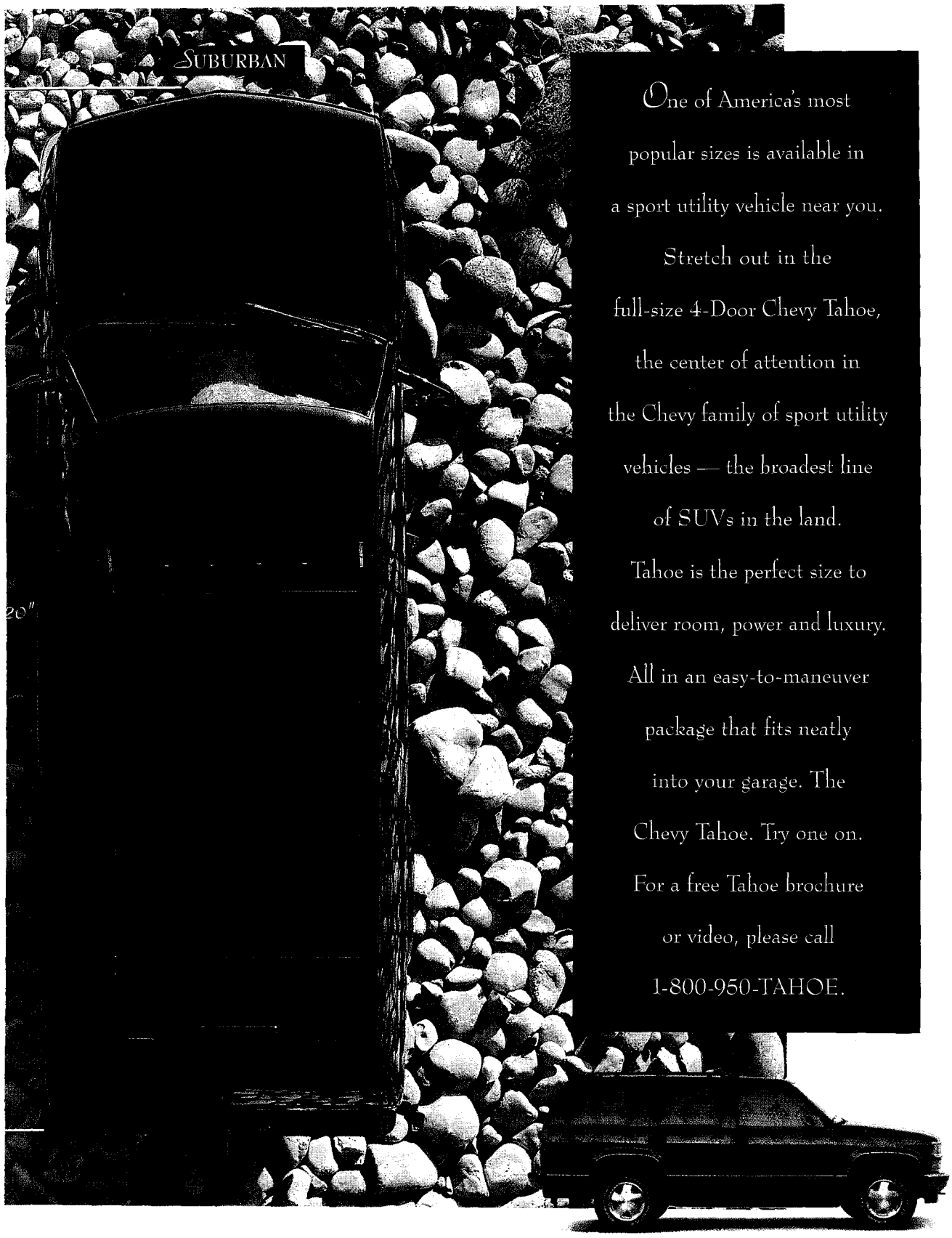

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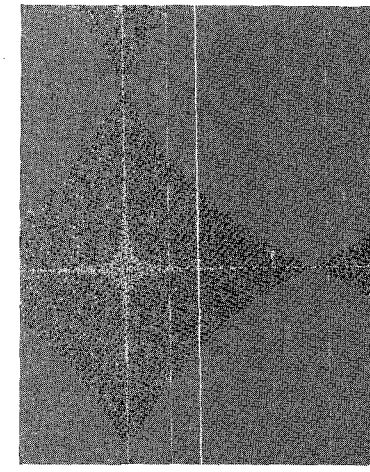

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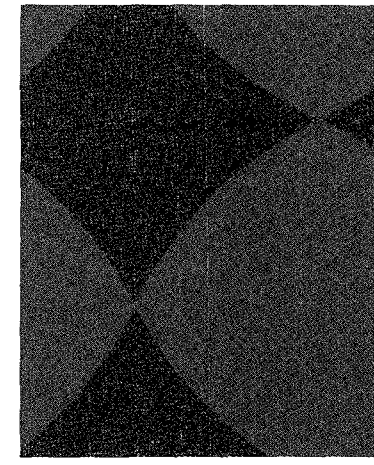

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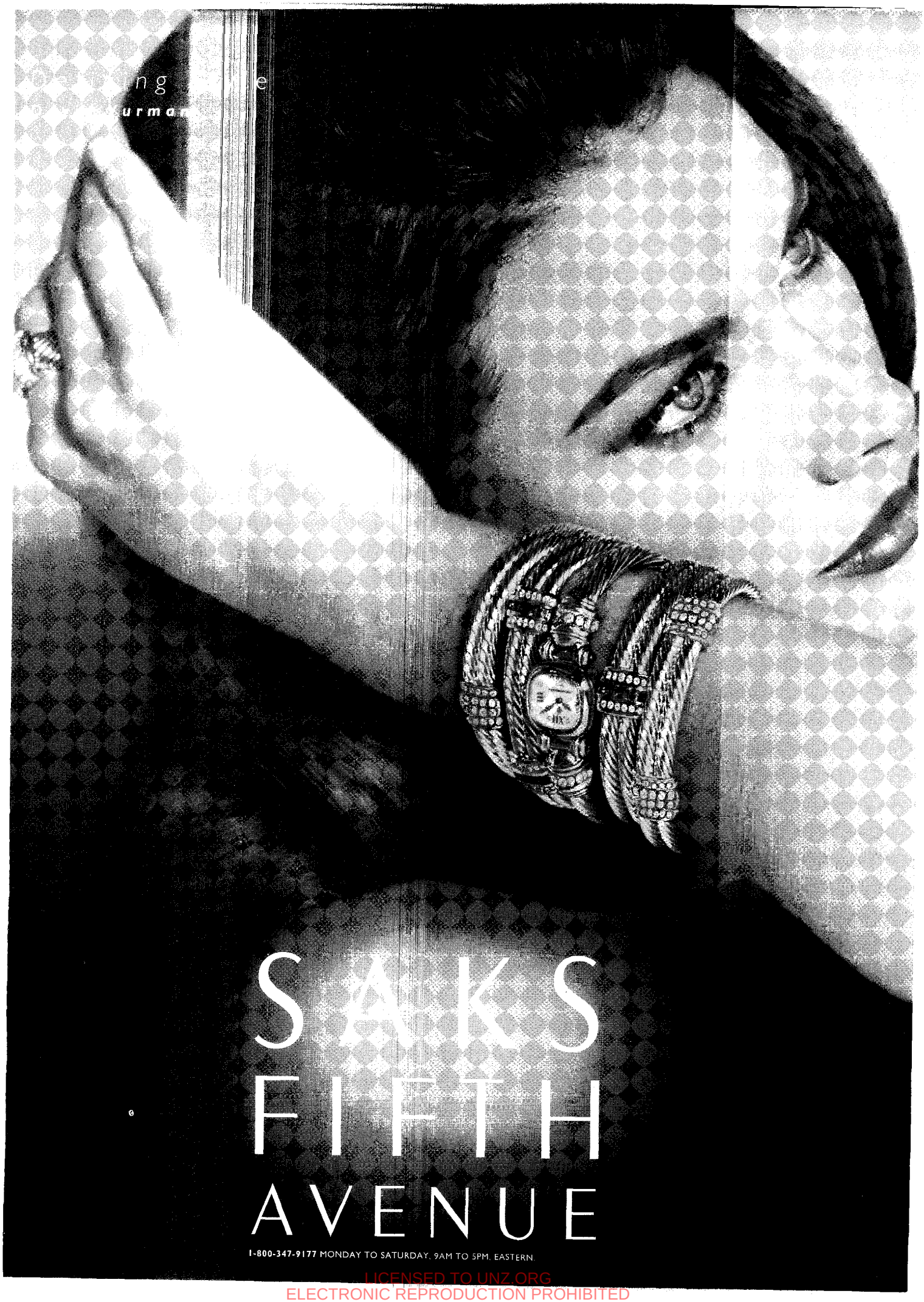

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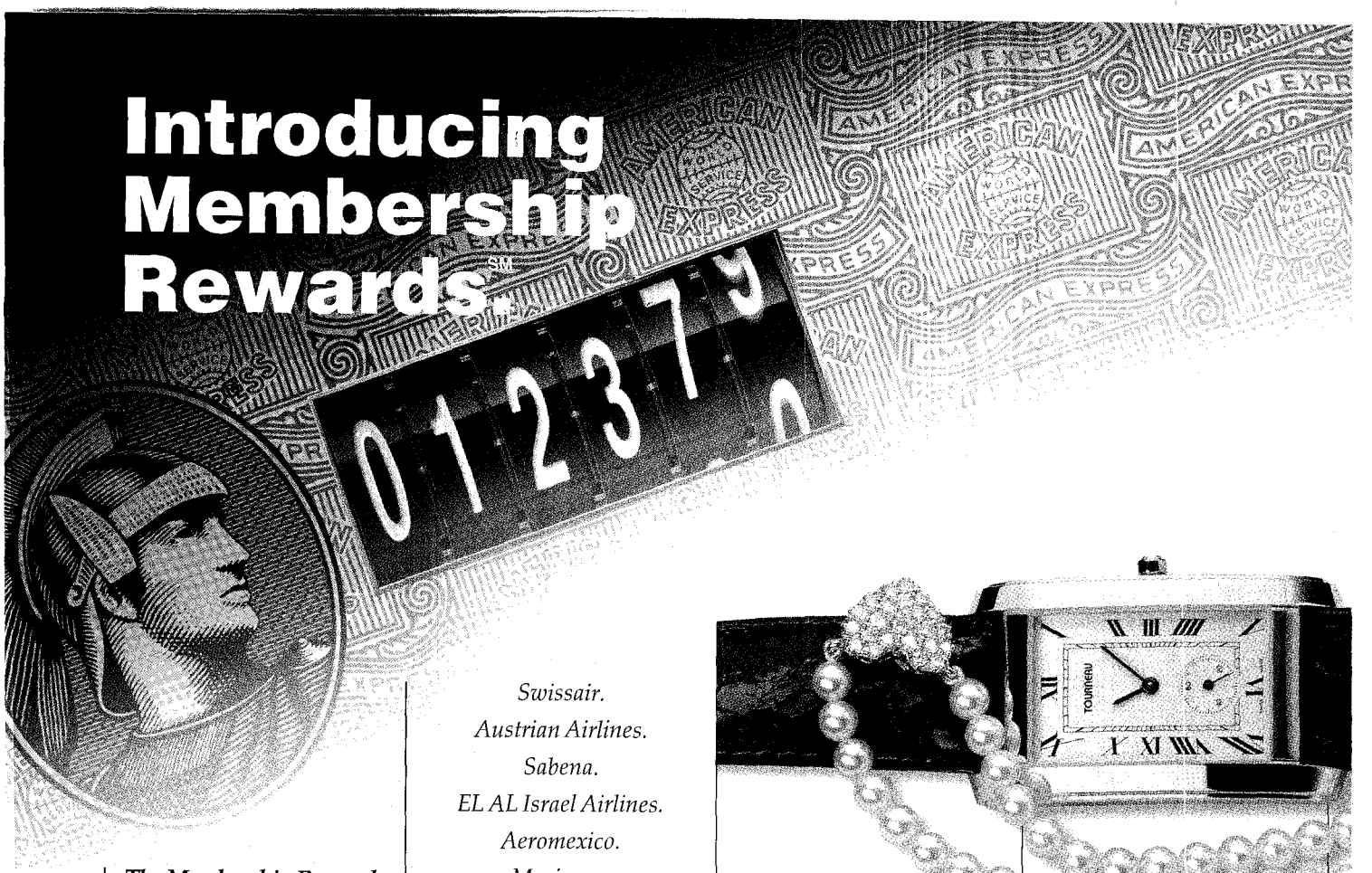

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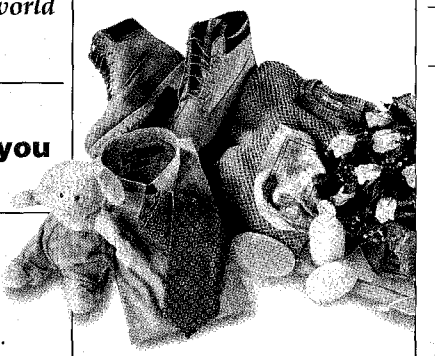

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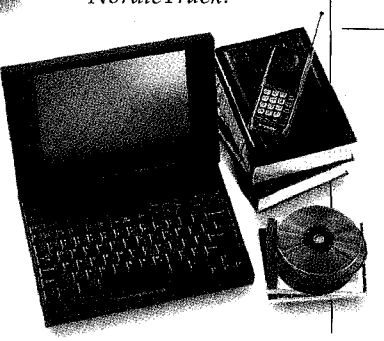

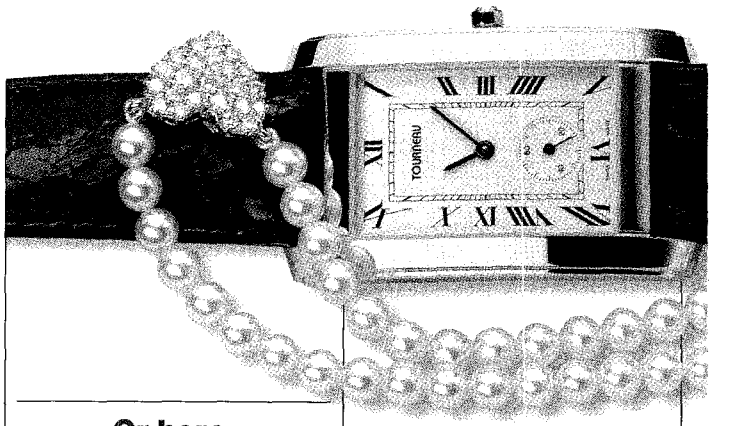

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LABOR PAINS

Toward less imperfect unions.

AFTER the great Democratic debacle a year ago, hardly anyone imagined that the one element of the liberal coalition that would pull its socks up would be organized labor. As recently as last February, the then president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., Lane Kirkland, upon being asked to articulate new perspectives, quoted his nineteenth-century predecessor Samuel Gompers ("More learning and less vice") and extolled Franklin D. Roosevelt's rural-electrification successes of the nineteen-thirties and the consequent decline of the kerosene lamp. No wonder the federation's own pollsters were reporting back from focus groups that a word commonly associated with unions was "dinosaur."

Shades of "Jurassic Park": the dinosaur is stirring. At the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s biennial convention here this week, an insurgent slate is widely expected to take over. To be sure, many of labor's problems—the globalization of the economy, the willingness of American corporations to break the law rather than permit unionization, the temping of an increasingly insecure workforce—may be beyond the capacity of any leadership to solve. But the revolt within the A.F.L.-C.I.O. is just one of a series of recent changes which suggest that labor is rousing itself from its Brezhnevian torpor.

Forty years ago, when the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merged, thirty-five per cent of America's workers were union members. Today, that figure has fallen to fifteen and a half per cent, and in the private sector it barely tops ten per cent. Despite an economic recovery of four years' duration, wages are stagnant. We seem to be returning to the economic and social configuration of pre-New Deal America, when unions were weak, booms confined to the wealthiest fifth of the population, and Americans entrenched behind barriers of race and ethnicity.

As labor's numbers drifted downward, its leaders just drifted. One mid-eighties survey turned up a scant two per cent of union officials whose duties included organizing. And at the top of the movement nothing ever seemed to change. In the hundred and nine years between the founding of the A.F.L. and this summer, the federation and its merged successor had a grand total of five presidents—or

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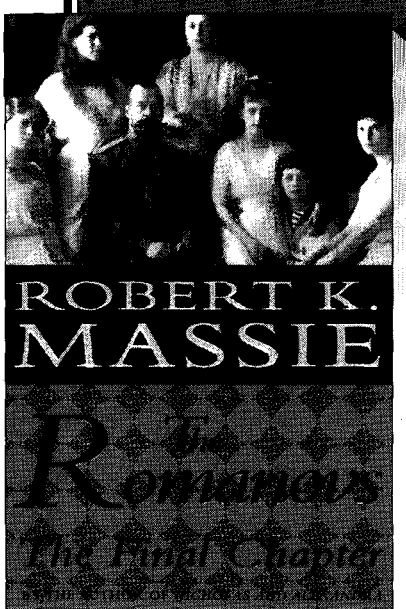
The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Nicholas and Alexandra* closes the book on the Romanovs



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RANDOM HOUSE

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four if you don't count a guy who had a one-year run in the middle of Gompers's thirty-seven-year reign. During that time, there were twenty Presidents of the United States and nine popes. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. was never one for the promiscuous rotation of élites.

Not, at least, until the sudden change of power in Congress. The Democratic majority on Capitol Hill had been labor's last line of defense. When it crumbled, the grievances that labor's dissidents had been storing up against Kirkland's A.F.L.-C.I.O.—it doesn't organize, it can't do politics, it's still fighting the Cold War, it has no media presence—burst forth. In June, a coalition of public-sector and industrial unions did the unthinkable: it proposed an unauthorized slate of candidates. Kirkland had expected to coast to a ninth two-year term; instead, sensing the inevitable, he resigned.

The reform coalition's choice for Kirkland's old job—John Sweeney, the president of the Service Employees International Union—seems at first glance an improbable revolutionist. Portly, bald, and sixty-one years old, he resembles nothing so much as one of the Fifth Avenue doormen he once represented as the head of a New York local. But in the fourteen years that he's headed the Service Employees—fourteen years in which the larger movement has withered—his union has doubled in size, to more than a million members, by dint of innovative organizing campaigns among such supposedly unorganizable workers as janitors and home-health-care employees. Seeking the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s No. 2 slot is Richard Trumka, the president of John L. Lewis's old United Mine Workers, who is a forty-six-year-old firebrand in the tradition of Walter Reuther and Eugene Debs. The third member of the slate is Linda Chavez-Thompson, a Texas-based public-employee leader, who if she is elected will be the first nonwhite leader of a national labor federation.

The odd man out in this struggle may be Tom Donahue, Kirkland's longtime lieutenant. A thoughtful innovator, he is largely responsible for whatever new initiatives the federation undertook during Kirkland's tenure. At first, the insurgent coalition had looked to Donahue to oppose Kirkland, but Donahue made it clear that he would not go up against his patron. Not until Sweeney had announced his candidacy and Kirkland his resignation did Donahue proclaim his availability. Unfortunately for him, his hesitation has made him the candidate of the unions most resistant to change. Donahue has been named interim president by the outgoing A.F.L.-C.I.O. council, but Sweeney apparently has the votes to win the position at this week's convention. Caught between regimes, Donahue seems doomed to be the Kerensky of this quasi-revolution.

The platforms of both the Sweeney and the Donahue camps mark a sharp departure from the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s past practice—sharper, to be sure, in Sweeney's case. Broadly speaking, Sweeney and his allies are trying to reinvent the lost culture of organizing: they want to spend more money on organizing drives, persuade rank-and-file members to get involved in them, and train a cadre of skilled organizers who can be on tap for the entire movement.

Many of labor's new organizers (though very few of labor's topmost leaders) are female or nonwhite, or both—a transformation driven by the fact that, as polling shows, women (especially of color) are far more pro-union than their white male counterparts. The same polling finds workers profoundly skeptical not only of unions' ability to deliver in the new world economy but also of unions' claims to be authentically democratic institutions. Labor has begun to respond to these doubts as well. Steve Yokich, the new United Auto Workers chief, is endeavoring to cobble together a genuinely international union of metalworkers. And the insurgents' challenge to Kirkland and Donahue has shown an understandably insecure movement that public self-criticism can be more an asset than a liability.

The implications of a renaissance within American labor go well beyond the confines of the movement itself. It was through unions that American workers acquired the clout to create the world's first middle-class majority—an epochal achievement that has been all but undone by the demise of an organized workforce. It was only during the period of mass prosperity, and often through the efforts of such bastions of multiracial liberalism as the U.A.W., that our historic levels of racial polarization were reduced. The business upon which labor's new leaders are embarking this week, then, isn't just the rebuilding of a viable labor movement. It's the rebuilding of a viable America.

—HAROLD MEYERSON

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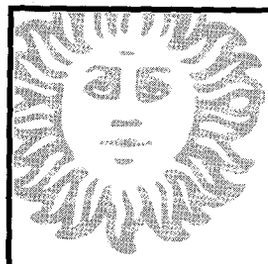

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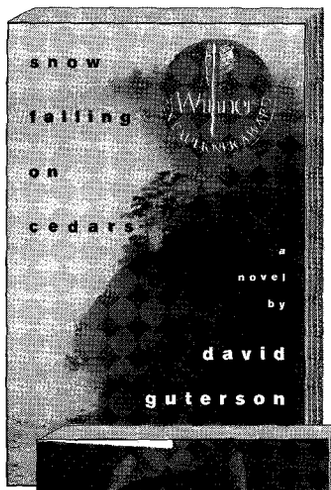

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THE POLITICS OF POWELL

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.,'s survey of Colin Powell's political fortunes ("Powell and the Black Élite," September 25th) raised the troubling thought that in American politics character and qualifications are salient only when the candidate appears to lack them. Powell clearly has both, and both are needed to counteract the sleazy yet effective self-righteousness that dominates our political scene. Now that the Simpson trial has ended, perhaps we as a nation can have a hand in a different "Othello" scenario—one in which the noble black warrior marries his "fair" beloved (in this case, white America) and lives happily for a term or two.

ELLEN HERSON WITTMANN
Pensacola, Fla.

I was astonished to read in Mr. Gates's otherwise excellent article on Colin Powell that Powell's cousin and business partner Bruce Llewellyn considers white people to be, in his own words, "a bunch of racist, no-good motherfuckers." Gates inexplicably lets this pass without comment. How, I wonder, would he or any other person of conscience react if, say, a business partner and relative of Bob Dole's or Bill Clinton's used such words in reference to black people? Will Colin Powell be called to account for his association with an unabashed anti-white racist?

VINCE BEISER
New York City

Mr. Gates's portrait of Colin Powell implies that—because he subscribes to traditional American values, abjures multicultural diversions, speaks like the rest of our national leaders, is not paranoid about racism, and won't consider politically correct "excuses" for unacceptable behavior—perhaps in the eyes of many blacks, and in those of Gates himself, Powell isn't "black enough." By extension, this seems to mean that Americans should be ashamed of themselves for accepting him, since they wouldn't accept a black candidate who speaks in black dialect, foments white guilt, blames society for all black problems, and promotes entitlements. It seems that both accepting Powell and rejecting Jesse Jackson betray racist attitudes.

ARTHUR GINSBERG
New York City

In a recent *New Yorker* article about me by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., I was quoted discussing the situation in Nigeria in a way that suggested I was attacking all Nigerians. I have the greatest respect for the people of Nigeria. Nigeria is a land of great potential and possesses a proud and rich history stretching across the years. I have steadfastly supported the desire of the Nigerian people to live under civilian democratic rule. In my interview with Gates, I vented my frustration over the lack of progress toward democracy in Nigeria and the impact that corruption on the part of some Nigerians was having on the reputation of Nigeria and all Nigerians. Unfortunately, my comments, in the context of the article, gave the impression that I was disparaging of all Nigerians. Nothing could be further from the truth. I deeply regret and apologize for the distress this has caused in the Nigerian community. I will continue to seek every opportunity to speak out for democracy in Nigeria.

COLIN L. POWELL
McLean, Va.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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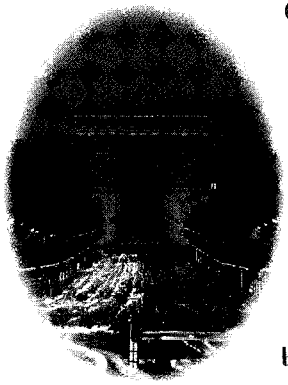

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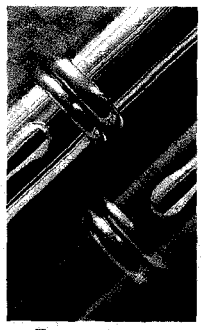

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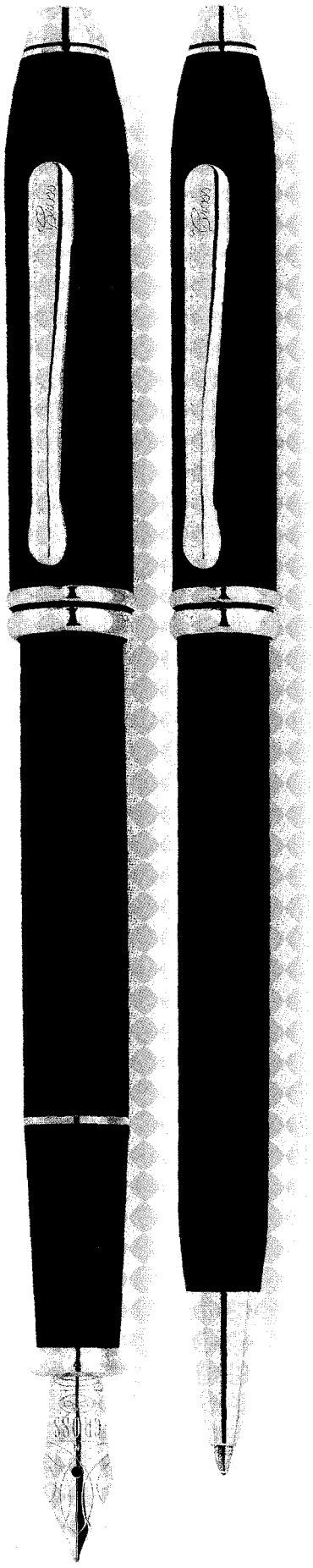

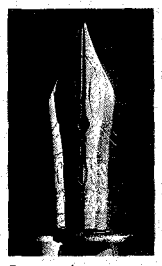

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THE THEATRE

LuPone on Her Own

FOR a moment or two during the first half of "Patti LuPone on Broadway," you may wonder why this stripped-down concert has shown up at the Walter Kerr rather than at Rainbow & Stars. With no scenery and just a microphone and a small band to accompany her, the petite star stands in the spotlight singing material better suited to more intimate surroundings: a knock-out medley of Bob Telson and Brenda Russell songs, a couple of Kurt Weill numbers that highlight her skills as an actress and her clarion mezzo-soprano.

But in the second half LuPone's voice fills the house, and with her renditions of "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina" (from "Evita"), a tour de force of Garland-size emotions right down to the love-me-please hand gestures, and "As If We Never Said Goodbye" ("Sunset Boulevard"), she confirms her place among all the other divas on the midtown marquees. These outsize signature numbers aren't the evening's standouts, though—the songs with the close-harmony backup quartet are. When you hear LuPone apply her lungs to the unamplified ballad "Moonshine Lullaby," you realize that she needs miking about as much as Ethel Merman did.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Antigone—The Pearl Theatre Company presents Sophocles' tragedy. Previews begin Oct. 27. (80 St. Mark's Pl. 598-9802.)

Cuba Libre—Three Cuban stars—singers Meme Solis and Annia Linares and dancer Sonia Calero—appearing together for the first time perform a retrospective revue of their careers along with new material. Previews begin Oct. 26. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Danny Gans on Broadway—The comic and singer makes his Broadway début, with a repertoire of more than two hundred impersonations. Previews begin Oct. 27. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

5 Plays by Kenneth Koch—Michael John Carley directs five of the poet's vignettes—"The Brave Bull," "Crêpe de Chine," "The Black Spanish Costume," "Mary Magdalene's Song," and "The Death of Sir Brian Caitskill." Oct. 26-29 at 7:30. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

Fool Moon—Clowning and music with Bill Irwin, David Shiner, and North Carolina's Red Clay Ramblers, who have returned to Broadway with their 1993 show. In previews through Oct. 28. Opens Oct. 29 at 6:30. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Master Class—Zoe Caldwell is Maria Callas in Terrence McNally's examination of the diva as teacher. With Audra McDonald, Karen Kay Cody, David Loud, and Jay Hunter Morris. Leonard Foglia is the director. Previews begin Oct. 26. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Monogamist—A poet discovers that his wife is having an affair with one of her students, in Christopher Kyle's satirical comedy. Directed by Scott Elliott. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

New England—A dark comedy by Richard Nelson, about a family of English transplants at odds with America. Directed by Howard Davies. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Northeast Local—Lincoln Center Theatre presents Terry Alexander, Eileen Heckart, Anthony LaPaglia, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in a new play by Tom Donaghy, which follows a working-class family through three decades. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. In previews through Oct. 28. Opens Oct. 29 at 6:45. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Old, Wicked Songs—An impassive American pianist living in Vienna in 1986 undergoes a spiritual awakening with the help of an elderly Austrian professor and the music of Schumann. Presented by the Jewish Repertory Theatre. Previews begin Oct. 28. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Private Lives—A Pan Asian Repertory Theatre production of Noël Coward's comedy. In previews through Oct. 26. Opens Oct. 27 at 8. (Playhouse 46 at St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

Racing Demon—In David Hare's play, a group of clergymen confronts the problems of operating a mission in inner-city London. The cast includes Kathleen Chalfant, Michael Cumpsty, Paul Giamatti, George Martin, Brian Murray, Denis O'Hare, and Josef Sommer. Directed by Richard Eyre. Previews begin Oct. 31. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Riff Raff—Laurence Fishburne makes his playwriting and directorial début and stars in this drama, set during the twenty-four hours following a drug robbery, which examines the relationships between an ex-con, his ex-partner, and a junkie. In previews. (Circle Repertory Company, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

Rodgers & Hart Rediscovered—A staged concert production of the 1938 musical "I Married an Angel" opens this new series devoted to the music and lyrics of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. Victoria Clark, Marin Mazzie, and Brent Barrett are in the cast. Oct. 29-30 at 8. Four more productions will be presented in this season's series, which continues through June 10. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 307-4100.)

Sacrilege—Ellen Burstyn, Kevin McCarthy, and Giancarlo Esposito star in a new play by Diane Shaffer, about a Manhattan nun who wants to become a priest. Previews begin Oct. 26. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

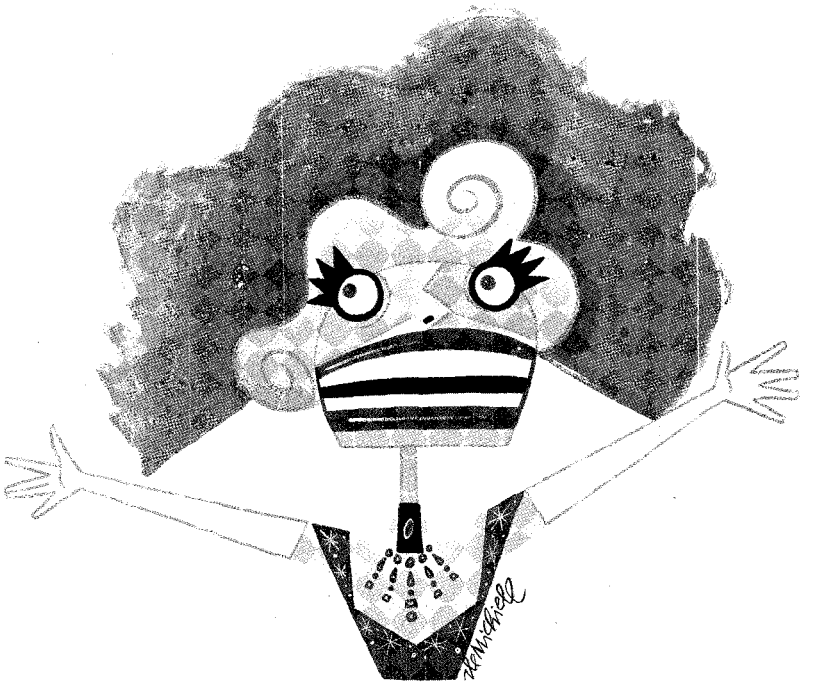
Songs for a New World—The WPA Theatre opens its nineteenth season with a revue written by Jason Robert Brown and directed by Daisy Prince. In previews through Oct. 25. Opens Oct. 26 at 8. (519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

The Tempest—The New York Shakespeare Festival's Central Park production, starring Patrick Stewart and directed by George C. Wolfe, moves indoors for a twelve-week run. In previews. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Victor/Victoria—Julie Andrews has returned to Broadway to star, with Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York, in a theatrical version of the 1982 movie. Written and directed by Blake Edwards. Choreography by Rob Marshall; score by the late Henry Mancini. Opens Oct. 25 at 6:30. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Chris Durang & Dawne—You may know Christopher Durang as a talented, wildly funny playwright, but that's only part of the story—he's also a talented, wildly funny performer, and here, with Sherry Anderson and John Augustine as his partners in musical crime,



Carol Channing, in "Hello, Dolly!"

ROBERT DEMICHIELL

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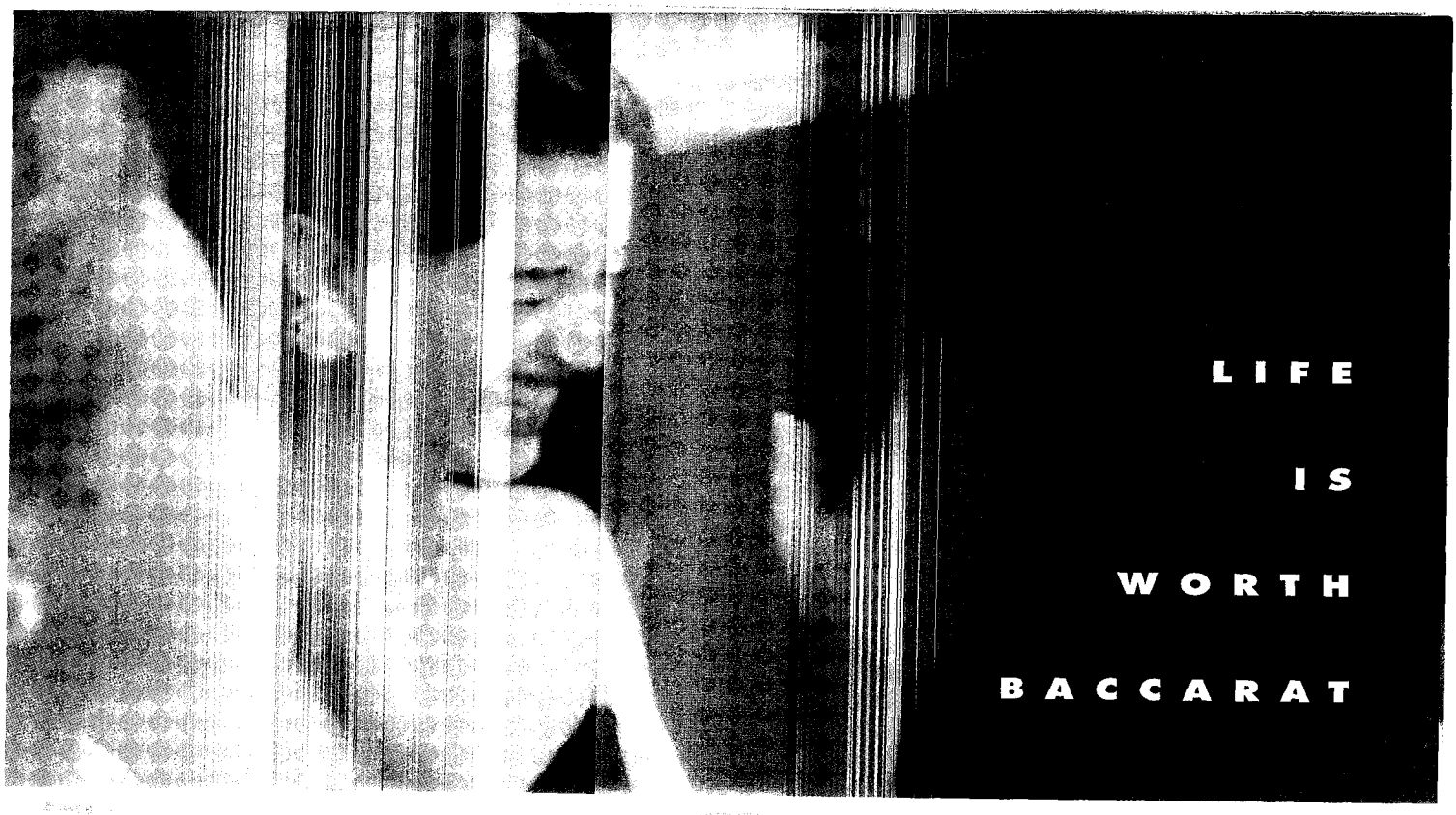

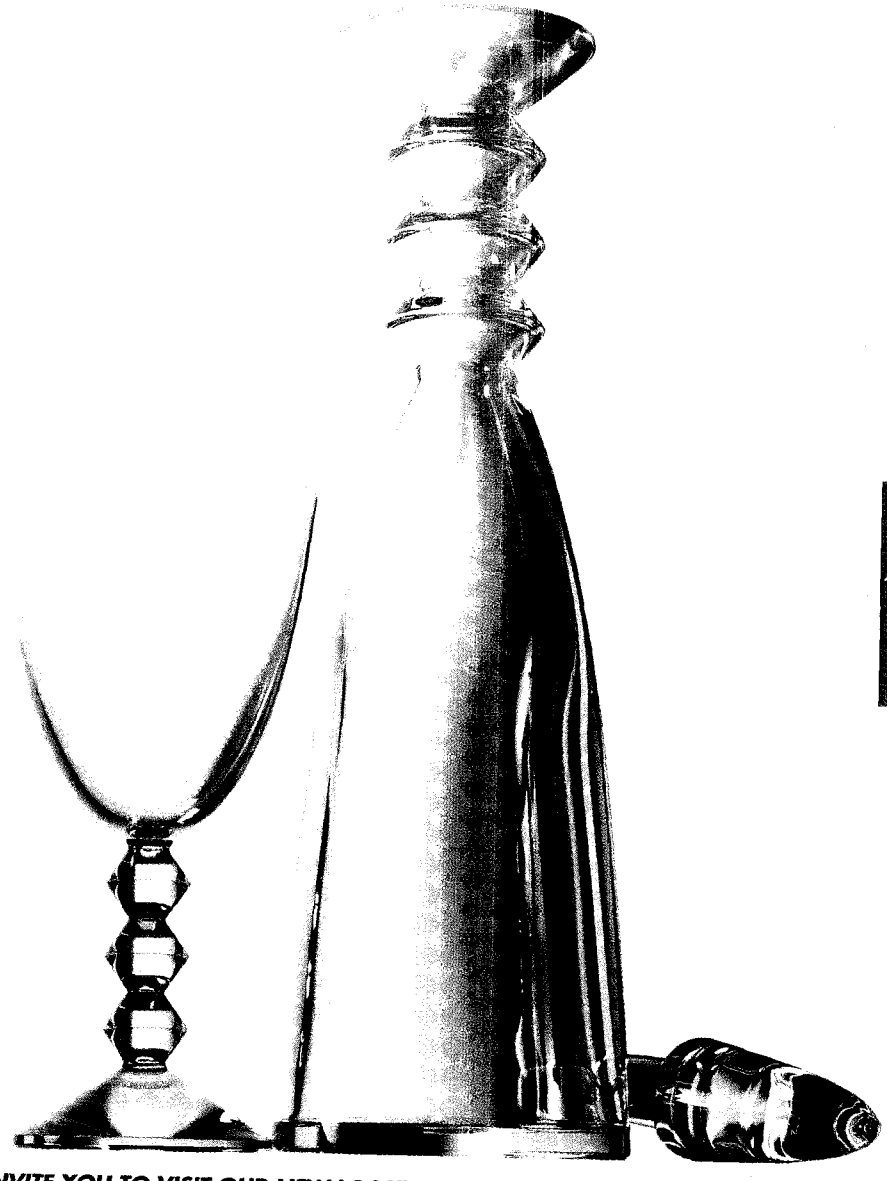

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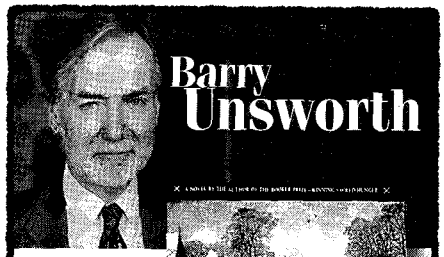
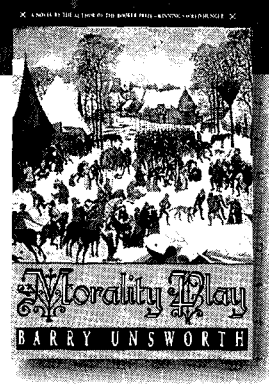
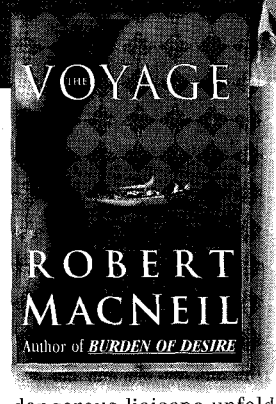




Short-listed for the Booker Prize, ***Morality Play*** is a fascinating exploration of a double murder in a 14th century English town. **"Pure adrenaline on every page. But this is no mere historical thriller...this is that rare and precious thing: a perfect novel."**—*The Independent (London)*



This superb tale of political intrigue and dangerous liaisons unfolds with the narrative drive of a master storyteller. Early reviews are calling it **"Extraordinary...a compelling read...an original, bittersweet romantic drama that is given an extra twist."**

—*Publishers Weekly starred review*

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he roasts musical chestnuts as well as some of the more ridiculous songs that have floated to the top of the charts. Durang claims that the trio has been busy touring Ramada Inns ("It's been horrible . . . but fun"); their well-honed, majestically second-rate song stylings include a version of "I Want Your Sex" that segues into "Sixteen Going On Seventeen," and a blissfully bad rendition of "Liza with a 'Z.'" (The Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)

Company—Although the god of casting does not shine on the Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's 1970 musical, nothing can dim the brilliance of a score whose themes of fear, loneliness, and anxiety in relationships have become more urgent as the battle between the sexes has intensified. In the show's best-written scene, Veanne Cox, as a would-be bride, knocks the audience dead when she crawls across the floor, pale and bug-eyed, and sings "Getting Married Today." Directed by Scott Ellis. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/23/95.) (Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Crocodiles in the Potomac—Wendy Belden's comedy takes place in Washington, D.C., at the time of the Watergate hearings. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 765-1706. Closes Nov. 12.)

Dangerous Corner—David Mamet directs the Atlantic Theatre Company's production of J. B. Priestley's 1932 mystery, in which a family's dinner party turns sour when secrets are revealed. (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

Endgame—Classic Stage Company's powerful revival of Samuel Beckett's 1957 play, in which four people (perhaps the last four on earth) live out their days. The cast is very strong; Kathleen Chalfant, in particular, embodies Beckett's ideas and makes them clear. The sure-handed direction is by David Esbjornson. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes Oct. 29.)

The Food Chain—In Nicky Silver's new play, the paths of five New Yorkers cross, hilariously. The situations are familiar and sitcomish, but the writing is tangy and memorably funny, and the actors—especially Hope Davis, as a dithery poet, and Phyllis Newman, as a long-suffering Jewish matron whose idea of listening is to talk—give smart, wonderfully fresh performances. Robert Falls directed. (9/11/95) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Full Gallop—Just when you thought you'd seen enough one-person shows to last you the rest of the decade, along comes Mary Louise Wilson with her vibrant and unexpectedly touching portrayal of Diana Vreeland, whose will and imagination were let loose for several decades at *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. Wilson, who co-wrote the script with Mark Hampton, re-creates the dash, verve, and inspired vulgarity with which D. V. went at the world. "Delightful, delicious, *divine*!" Directed by Nicholas Martin. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Garden District—These two Tennessee Williams one-acts, which were originally presented together in 1958, are both set in New Orleans in the thirties, and they go well together, at least in theory: one is about the delusion of power, the other about the power of delusion. But the productions are sorely lacking in chemistry, and the evening is an arduous one. Myra Carter, as a controlling old woman in "Something Unspoken," is sly and pathetic, and always highly watchable, but she and Pamela Payton-Wright, who plays her longtime secretary, create no tension. And the thrashing about of Elizabeth Ashley and Jordan Baker in "Suddenly Last Summer" never succeeds in bringing the play to life. Theodore Mann and Harold Scott directed. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 5.)

Having Our Say—Bessie Delany (who died in September) and Sadie Delany, two sisters who passed the hundred-year mark, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who were taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

At the Jean Cocteau Repertory: Craig Smith and Harris Berlinsky, in "Waiting for Godot."

KAREN CALDICOTT

Hello, Dolly!—Carol Channing reprises the role of Dolly Levi, the matchmaker in pursuit of a millionaire, which she created in the 1963 musical. Lee Roy Reams directs. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Hunting Humans—Richard Thompson's black comedy, about four men who bond at a friend's funeral, was recently seen at Edinburgh's Festival Fringe. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 473-4473. Closes Oct. 28.)

Indiscretions—This production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles," a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life, is marred by Kathleen Turner's unfocussed performance as a hysterically possessive mother. Roger Rees, Dana Ivey, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting "Nathan the Wise," Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's 1779 drama, in repertory with a solid production of Beckett's "Waiting for Godot." (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Mathew in the School of Life—An angelic android who has been created to absorb the suffering of the world is at the center of this wonderfully disjointed multimedia work, a

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collaboration by composer John Moran, director Bob McGrath, and the Ridge Theatre. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Closes Oct. 29.)

The Memorandum—Václav Havel's comedy takes aim at workplace language and politics. An Independent Theatre Company production, directed by Michelle Gigante. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

Mrs. Klein—Uta Hagen stars in a suspense drama by Nicholas Wright, about the death, in 1934, of psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's son. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

The Model Apartment—A new play by Donald Margulies, about a couple whose mentally ill daughter disrupts their retirement plans. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Nov. 12.)

Moon Over Buffalo—Carol Burnett, whose last Broadway appearance was thirty years ago (Carol, please don't let that happen again), and Philip Bosco star as husband-and-wife actors in Ken Ludwig's backstage farce, set in a small Buffalo theatre in the early fifties. The play is as forgettable as Burnett is not—our reigning red-headed queen of comedy is delightful to behold. Bosco gives good support as her bluff, egotistical hubby. Also with Jane Connell (who has the thankless job of playing a character whose only function is to be hard of hearing), Randy Graff, and Dennis Ryan. Tom Moore directed. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Moonlight—Jason Robards, Blythe Danner, and Paul Hecht lead the cast in the Roundabout's production of Harold Pinter's latest play. Directed by Karel Reisz. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Moscow Stations—Tom Courtenay, playing equal parts underground man and commuting mixologist, dispenses insight about the souls of Muscovites as well as recipes for home brews that belong on a shelf next to the solvents, in an anecdotal two-act monologue adapted from the 1969 samizdat novel (published in 1980) by Venidikt Yerofeyev. Courtenay's loquacious drinker isn't just a barstool metaphysician: his dignified, unresigned spirit always shines through. Ian Brown, of Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, directed. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Murder at Minsing Manor: A Nancy Boys Mystery—Everett Quinton and his Ridiculous Theatrical Company take on the mystery genre in this farce by Michael Simon and Richard Simon. Mr. Quinton stars as the heroine, Glory Holden. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200.)

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with terrifically funny (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

Patti LuPone on Broadway—The musical-theatre star, in a concert production. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Picasso at the Lapin Agile—This play from the pen of Steve Martin, which had its première in 1993 at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, is set in 1904, in a Parisian bistro where a young Albert Einstein (Mark Nelson) and a younger Pablo Picasso (Tim Hopper) discuss big ideas. Randall Arney is the director. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Sin—When a San Francisco earthquake sets off a chain of tragedies in the life of a young helicopter traffic reporter (Kelly Coffield), she is forced to come down from the heights and walk among her sinful brethren. Wendy MacLeod's comedy, a series of vivid, well-acted confrontations, draws on "Everyman" but reminds us that our inability to resist the seven deadlies is what makes us human. Scott Bradley captures the Bay Area with an inventive, minimal set. David Petrarca directed. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes Nov. 5.)

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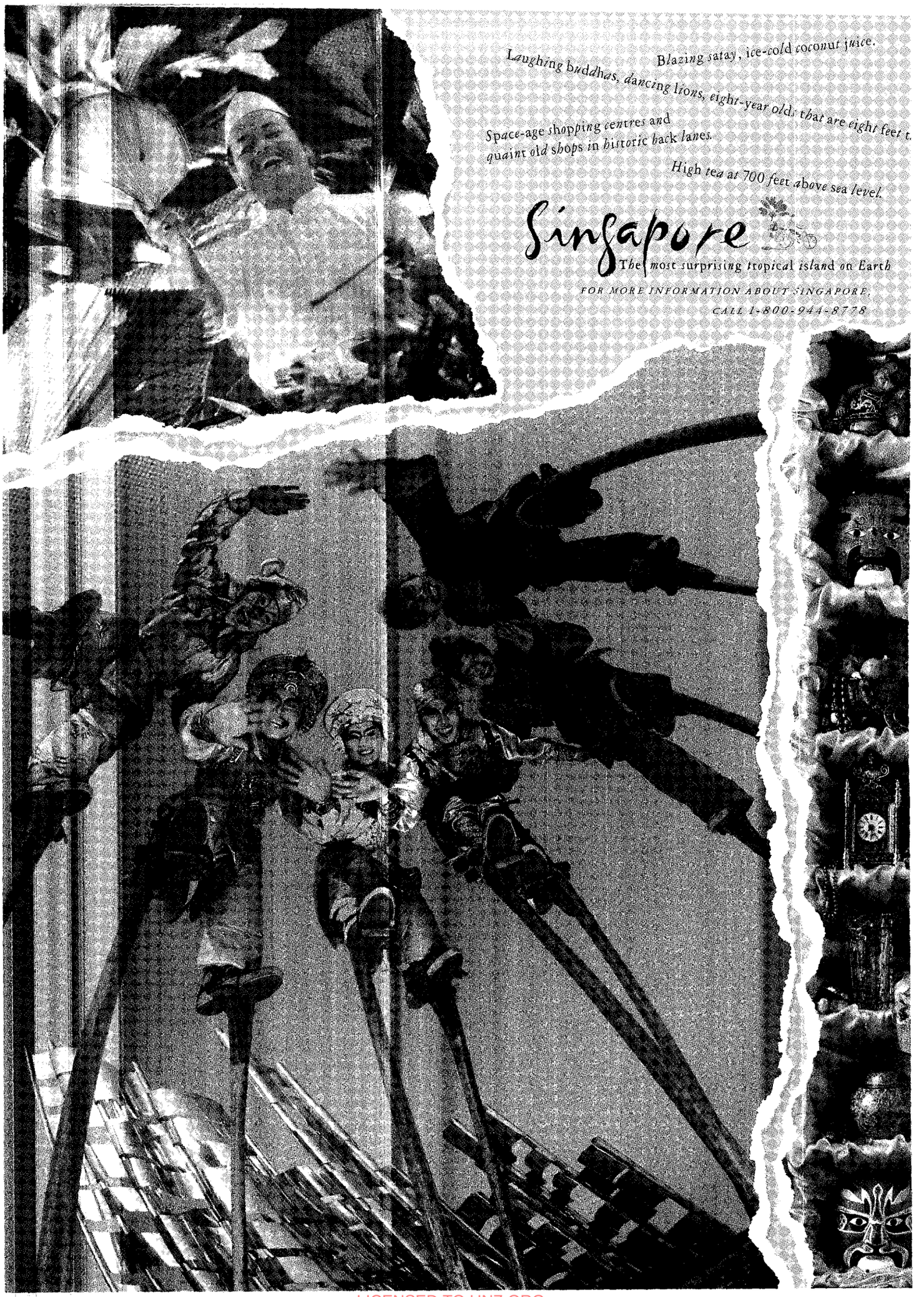

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Spoonbread and Strawberry Wine—Norma Jean Darden—model, caterer, actress—shares recipes and talks about her family in this reprise of her play, which was inspired by the cookbook she wrote with her sister, Carole Darden. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

Swinging on a Star—A musical tribute to the lyrics of Johnny Burke ("Misty," "Pennies from Heaven," "Moonlight Becomes You"), written and directed by Michael Leeds, with choreography by Kathleen Marshall. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Sylvia—A dog named Sylvia (Jan Hooks) brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mary Beth Peil). Unfortunately, A. R. Gurney's comedy, directed by John Tillinger, lacks bite. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Tallahassee—A jocular musical adaptation of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Ovid himself appears, transformed into a Beat poet banished from Tallahassee by the corrupt governor and forced into teaching Latin and shop at a junior college. A series of quirky song-and-dance numbers and a cast of swamp creatures in various stages of mutation lead to the conclusion that change is good—for a laugh. Book and lyrics by Mac Wellman and Len Jenkin; music by Jim Ragland and Elise Morris. (Workhouse Theatre, 41 White St. 431-9220. Closes Oct. 28.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman sets about reviving Yiddish in this mixture of songs and stories. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Two, Nikita—A suspense comedy by Jeffrey Hatcher, set in 1959, in which a citizen of the Soviet Union tries to defect to the United States while Nikita Khrushchev is here visiting. (Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. 627-7292. Closes Oct. 29.)

What Ever—Heather Woodbury brings her eight-part solo serial, in which she plays ten major characters and more than ninety minor ones, back to P.S. 122. Directed by Dudley Saunders. Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30. Through Oct. 28. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

What You Said—The improv company Chicago City Limits presents a brand-new revue, featuring its ever-popular five-minute musical. (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

Young Playwrights Festival—Presenting "Guyworld," by Bret LaGree; "The King," by Denise Ruiz; "Proof Through the Night," by Clarence Coo; and "This Is About a Boy's Fears," by Shaun Neblett. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes Oct. 29.)

Zombies from the Beyond—A musical sendup of the science-fiction movies of the fifties. (Players, 115 MacDougal St. 254-5076.)

LONG RUNS

After-Play: Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200. . . . **Beauty and the Beast:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **Blue Man Group/Tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **Cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **Crazy for You:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Death Defying Acts:** Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **Grandma Sylvia's Funeral:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **Grease!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Heiress:** Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **Les Misérables:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Miss Saigon:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **Perfect Crime:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **The Phantom of the Opera:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **Show Boat:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **Stomp:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **Sunset Boulevard:** Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007. . . . **Swingtime Canteen:** Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Tony n' Tina's Wedding:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.

DANCE

"The Flies"—A piece about life in a Soviet communal apartment, conceived and directed by Russian installation artist Ilya Kabakov, with a score by Vladimir Tarasov and choreography by David Dorfman Dance. Wearing Kabakov's costumes (big mesh-helmet fly heads, padded bodies), Dorfman's troupe dances with a close-quartered frenzy intended to capture human longings in a place where, as Dorfman recently explained, "people were lonely because they were with people all the time." (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. Oct. 26-28 at 8.)

Maria Benitez Teatro Flamenco—The Santa Fe-based company appears in "El Amor Brujo," a flamenco version (set to the Manuel de Falla ballet score) of an Andalusian Gypsy tale about a scorned lover's sorcery. The performance closes with a series of eight shorter dances. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 25-27 at 8, Oct. 28 at 2 and 8, and Oct. 29 at 2 and 7:30.)

"Five Points of Articulation"—Choreographer Seán Curran's evening-length program, a collaboration with graphic designer Mark Randall, features a succession of the latter's projected glyphs and photographs timed to Curran's solos ("Lazy Man's Load," "Flexible While Frozen," and "Value Engineering") and group works ("A Musing Machine," "Heart Dis Ease," and "More Than a Lot"). (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Oct. 26-29 at 8:30.)

"Of Exposure"—Susan Braham weaves together the contributions of fellow choreographers Rebecca Hilton, Stephen Petronio, Susan Rethorst, and Sarah Skaggs, among others, in a solo dance to Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. The evening also includes Braham's group work "A Moment's Grace," performed by the choreographer and five male dancers. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Oct. 26-29 at 9.)

"Deep North"—The ten members of the Anima Mundi company perform Kathryn Roszak's ecological choreography while Ingor Ántte Áilu Gaup (who was raised as a reindeer herder in Arctic Scandinavia) sings a cycle of Sámi hymns celebrating nature. (La MaMa, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Oct. 26-28 at 7:30 and Oct. 29 at 3 and 7:30.)

San Francisco Ballet—The country's oldest ballet company opens its engagement with Mark Morris's "Maelstrom," Helgi Tomasson's "Quartette," and James Kudelka's "Terra Firma." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Oct. 31 at 7:30. Through Nov. 5.)

Duncan Dance Continuum—Reconstructions of three works by Isadora Duncan ("Marche Militaire," "Tragic March," and "Blue Danube Waltz") and two by Doris Humphrey in the Duncan tradition ("Sonata Pathétique" and "Valse Caprice"). (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 122nd St. Oct. 26-28 at 8 and Oct. 29 at 3. For reservations, call 864-2929.)

Creative Outlet—The Brooklyn dance-theatre troupe led by Jamel Gaines, founder of the dance ministry at St. Paul Community Baptist Church, in East New York, performs four works, including "Moving Lyrics," set to excerpts from the speeches of Malcolm, Martin, Maya, and Jesse. (Klitgord Theatre, 285 Jay St., at Tillary St., Brooklyn. 212-924-0077. Oct. 26-28 at 8.)

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NIGHT LIFE

Me, Jane

You might say that Jane Siberry has a multiple personality. "When I Was a Boy," the singer's 1993 album, was a moody art-rock opus. "Bound by the Beauty," the album before that, was ripe with schoolgirl charm (one track was called "Everything Reminds Me of My Dog.") Her latest effort, "Maria," has a piano-and-muted-trumpet palette, and it might almost qualify as jazz. The Canadian singer moved to New York last spring—"not to be deliberately cryptic, but certain things changed in my life"—and is finally comfortable with her adopted city. "In Canada, there's a softness that hasn't burnt off," she said recently over breakfast. "In New York, everything's up-front—you have to look good. I was never so interested in having my legs waxed." Unfortunately, you won't be seeing much of her legs, or the rest of her, on MTV (she's too challenging), or hearing "Oh My My," the final track of "Maria," on the radio (it's twenty minutes long), but you can catch her on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday at Fez—a small, smoky club where you can sit inches from the band and watch them master her knotty new material. That's how Siberry sees the gig: "It's like a work week, and everyone is welcome to watch us work."

Jane Siberry, at Fez.

TOM CURRY

CONCERTS

Tito Puente—The Latin legend, with his orchestra. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Oct. 25 at 7.)

Jimmy Page and Robert Plant—The Zeus and Thor of the rock pantheon deserve credit for not calling this tour a Led Zeppelin reunion, even though that's exactly what it is—minus, of course, the cold-shouldered John Paul Jones and the late John (Bonzo) Bonham. Long considered the ne plus ultra of testosterone-driven lummoxery, the band's work has become increasingly admired and influential. If you're willing to give those old albums another chance, you may find they sound a hell of a lot more sophisticated than they did in junior high. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Oct. 26-27 at 8.)

Cassandra Wilson—This jazz diva apprenticed in New Orleans with pianist Ellis Marsalis (father of Wynton and Branford), which is probably how she got so much seriousness and conviction at such an early age. Her voice is warm and weary, and her reach is remarkable: in addition to performing standards, she gives strong readings to material by Robert Johnson, Van Morrison, and Joni Mitchell. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. Oct. 27 at 7:30.)

Barry Manilow—There's something comforting about the continuing saga that is Manilow. He hasn't had a gargantuan smash like "Copacabana" or "Can't Smile Without You" since the Carter Administration, but he still inspires the hysterical adulation that unnerves crowd-control experts. Live, he always delivers. Expect hit after hit after hit, with brief descents into cocktail jazz and big-band swing. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. Oct. 27 at 8.)

Houria Aichi—The Algerian singer. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 545-7536. Oct. 27 at 8.)

"Festival of Persia"—Two nights of Persian music, with the Iranian pop singer Shahram Nazeri (Oct. 27), followed by an evening of folk and Sufi music from Khorasan, Kurdistan, and Baluchistan. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Oct. 27-28 at 8.)

"Combinación Perfecta"—A salsa showcase featuring La India, the best of the Latin new wavers who have invigorated salsa with an urban sting. This beautiful, cigar-smoking presence will be joined by Tony Vega, Tito Nieves, Oscar D'Leon, and Tito Puente. (Madison Square Garden. Oct. 28 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **Andrea Marcovicci** is currently in the midst of an extended run. Dining.

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Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Oct. 29: **LIONEL HAMPTON.** His humming vibraphone began accelerating in the mid-thirties and has slowed down only in the past several years. He still has that old lightsome swing—the easy chords, the legato glances at the beat, and the oval, mushrooming sound. He rocks church, as they used to say. Guitarist **LARRY CARLTON** grabs a handful of strings on Oct. 31. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Pianist **MULGREW MILLER** begins a six-night run on Oct. 30. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Time has not diminished the tasteful virtuosity of **BOBBY SHORT** (through late December). A fixture at the Café Carlyle, he can still spin an Ira Gershwin lyric with all the sophistication, humor, and pathos it deserves. Also well served are gems by Duke Ellington, Dorothy Fields, Irving Berlin, and, of course, Cole Porter.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Oct. 29: the J. J. Johnson quintet. Pianist **MC COY TYNER** swings by with a trio on Oct. 31. Dining.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Through Oct. 26: guitarist **JAMES (BLOOD) ULMER.**

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Vocalist **KEVIN MAHOGANY** is in through Oct. 28. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky. Vocalist **AMANDA MC BROOM** is the star in residence. Closed Mondays.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Through Oct. 26: **GATO BARBIERI.** Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Oct. 29: the **KENNY BARRON** two-piano quartet. Barron, one of the reigning gods of mainstream jazz, is joined on bop Olympus by second pianist **STEPHEN SCOTT**, whose casual daring and knockabout wit set him apart from the multitude of young wizards. The mixture of master-and-student respect and rival-gunslinger bravado should kick up some healthy creative tension. On Oct. 31, Barron returns with his quintet. While the instrumentation couldn't be more standard, the results are imaginative and frequently brilliant. The program combines Barron's canny originals with ingeniously rearranged classics. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—Through Oct. 28: vocalist **NANCY LAMOTT.** Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—**HAROLD ASHBY** (in through Oct. 29) has been carrying on the tradition of the big-toned, heart-on-the-sleeve tenor sax ever since Duke Ellington hired him as resident romantic in the mid-sixties. Ashby's forthright swing can surely cure what ails you. Vocalist **DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER** takes charge on Oct. 31. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

ROCK, ETC.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Oct. 26: **LUTHER ALLISON** and **JIMMY THACKERY.** An apprentice of Freddie King and Magic Sam, Allison can play a shuffle with the best of them. Like many underappreciated artists, he moved to France a while back, which makes this rare appearance more welcome than ever. Thackery was a founding member of the Nighthawks; his role model is Buddy Guy, and his guitar stings accordingly. Now in his seventies, flat-picking master **DOC WATSON** (Oct. 28) is the same avatar of American roots music that he was when folklorist Ralph Rinzler discovered him back in 1960. His latest album, "Docabilly," finds him breezing through songs by Elvis, Johnny Cash, and the Everly Brothers. With **SHARON SHANNON**, a nimble accordionist who merges traditional Irish music with rock and reggae. Oct. 29: **PATTY LARKIN**, a warm-voiced singer-songwriter who has spent the last ten years making imaginative, poetic music.

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Oct. 25: **CHRIS KNOX.** A seminal figure in the Australian punk scene of the past decade, Knox has mellowed into a tuneful, whimsical iconoclast. With Guv'ner. Oct. 26: The **MARTINIS**, featuring former members of the Pixies. With Space Needle.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Oct. 25 and Oct. 27-28: **JANE SIBERRY.** Oct. 31: The Loser's Lounge Halloween bash with **HARVEY SID FISHER.** Connoisseurs of camp, awake! The last time we saw Harvey Sid, he was on California public-access television performing his musical rendition of the horoscope ("Talk about the Taurus, talk about the bully, bull, bull"). His smoldering adenoidal sensuality has to be heard (and seen) to be believed. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Oct. 26: **WILCO.** When the acclaimed country-punk group Uncle Tupelo disbanded, singer Jay Farrar went on to form Son Volt (see Maxwell's), while his former songwriting partner, Jeff Tweedy, gave the world the more charismatic Wilco. Tweedy's songs are less piercing than Farrar's tortured vignettes, but his band has a rare enthusiasm: with slithering fiddles, cranking guitars, and rootsy charm, they turn every gig into a hoedown. Jean-Paul (Bluey) Maunick, the guitarist-mastermind behind **INCOGNITO** (Oct. 29), takes seventies soul and reinvents it for the nineties. "100 and Rising," the group's extraordinary fifth album, is full of passion, and Maunick's talented trio of singers—Joy Malcolm, Barry Stewart, and Pamela Anderson—swing with sophisticated verve. Live, the ensemble swells to a tight twelve-piece unit that makes your hips sway and your heart swoon.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—If guitarist **RICK DERRINGER** (Oct. 26) should ever shuffle off this mortal coil, he'll be remembered for three major cultural contributions: "Hang On Sloopy," "Rock 'n' Roll Hoochie Koo," and producing the work of Weird Al Yankovic.

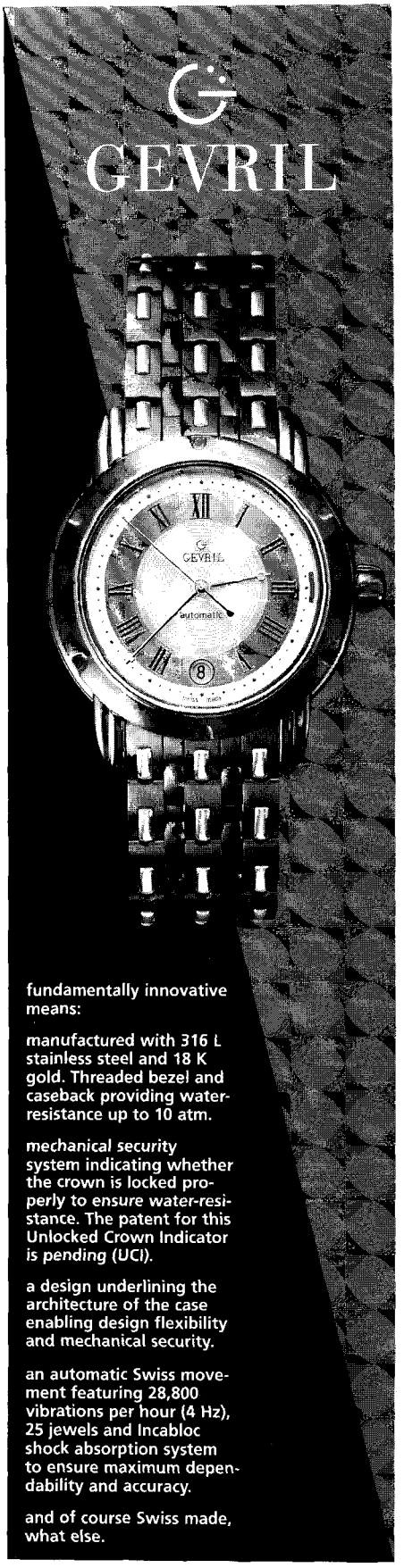
Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—Oct. 31: **SON VOLT.** Reborn from the same ashes that gave us Wilco (see Irving Plaza), Son Volt features raggedy guitars, stark acoustic plucking, and cut-to-the-bone tales that make its début album, "Trace," a dark, down-and-out vision.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Oct. 26: **GAVIN FRIDAY.** The Irish androgyne sneaks into town to preview his forthcoming "Shag Tobacco." A topnotch dramatist, he writes smoky material suited for a Weimar cabaret. It takes a bit of patience to appreciate his low, breathy tenor, but once you're hooked you're in for a delirious treat: he's Leonard Cohen, Marianne Faithful, and Marc Bolan all rolled into one. Oct. 27: Former Bongo **RICHARD BARONE.** With **LORI CARSON.**

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Oct. 26: The big hair of **RANCID.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Oct. 27: **SON VOLT** (see Maxwell's). Oct. 28: Zydeco man **BOOZOO CHAVIS.** Oct. 29: The **PHARCYDE.** Most West Coast rappers deal with guns, drugs, and misogyny, but the Pharcyde's four m.c.s aren't afraid of their feelings. Their talent for acting goofy and singing harmony endears them to the females, and their two Lollapalooza tours proved that they get along with the Waspafarians and the frat boys, too. Oct. 30-31: **GEORGE CLINTON.** His Parliament-Funkadelic army fused metal guitars, sci-fi silliness—who can forget the spaceship they dragged onstage?—and the heaviest funk rhythms imaginable, then set out on a mission to "rescue dance music from the blahs." Today he's something of an institution, invoked by rockers like Primus and the Red Hot Chili Peppers and sampled extensively by rappers like Dr. Dre.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Oct. 25: **RON SEXSMITH.** His début (which appears, inexplicably, on Interscope Records, best known for its dirty-mouthed gangsta acts) is a grab bag of acoustic guitar, drum machine, and homesick blues. With **MOXY FRUVOUS.** Oct. 26: **KEVIN SALEM.**



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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Since the beginning of this century, scholarly and scientific analyses have cut the number of paintings believed to be authentic Rembrandts in half—from six hundred and fifty to around three hundred. "Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt," an exhibition displaying fifty-five paintings from the museum's collection by Rembrandt, his pupils, and emulators of his style, along with a selection of drawings and prints, explores these changes in attribution. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "John Singelton Copley in America," seventy-five portraits of affluent Bostonians and New Yorkers, done before the artist packed up for London in 1775. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "Goya in the Metropolitan Museum of Art" handsomely assembles all of the museum's Goya holdings—long a cornerstone of its collection. Most of the works are prints, the medium in which the artist expressed himself most boldly. The final gallery offers a side-by-side comparison of the two "Majas on a Balcony": an unquestionably authentic painting on loan from a private collector, and the Met's version, whose authenticity has recently been challenged. The Met's majas are looking rather wan. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ "Pages of Perfection," Islamic art from the Russian Academy of Sciences, in St. Petersburg, is remarkable not only for its rare early examples of Muslim calligraphy (dating as far back as the eighth century) but also for a group of late, decadent miniatures that imitate Western painting. Through Dec. 10. . . . ¶ Trenchcoats, epaulets, tartans, aviator glasses, khaki, and many other elements of civilian dress were recruited from the militaries of the world. "Swords Into Ploughshares," in the Costume Institute, offers a hundred outfits and a host of visual links between the wardrobes of the warrior and leisure classes. Through Nov. 26. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits, until Oct. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

"Swords Into Ploughshares," at the Metropolitan Museum.

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Piet Mondrian: 1872-1944," which comes to New York from The Hague, via Washington, D.C., is a medium-sized blockbuster, with a hundred and sixty paintings and drawings, close to half of them from the thirties and forties. The MOMA installation has a few exclusives: "Broadway Boogie Woogie" and the unfinished "Victory Boogie Woogie," and a recreation of the artist's last studio, at 15 E. 59th St. Through Jan. 23. . . . ¶ "Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George," ninety-three photographs taken at Stieglitz's upstate retreat, most of them from the twenties and thirties. Through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ Uta Barth, Joseph Bartscherer, Ulrich Görlich, and Eric Rondepierre have contributed new photographs and site-specific installations to "New Photography 11." Through Jan. 9. . . . ¶ "Light Construction" examines, through models, large photographs, and drawings, the concepts of transparency and translucency in contemporary architecture. Through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ A small show of works from the seventies to the present by the French Conceptualist Annette Messager, who combines photographed, painted, and drawn images with found and constructed objects and text. Through Jan. 16. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology" features more than two hundred of the Popster's hard and soft sculptures, collages, and drawings for existing large-scale projects and proposed colossal monuments. Through Jan. 21. . . . ¶ "Joel-Peter Witkin," a mid-career retrospective of the photographer's astonishing and horrifying œuvre. Through Jan. 14. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica." Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ A show titled "Picassoid" examines, in the works of American artists, the influence of three phases of Picasso's career: Cubism, Classicism, and Surrealism. Through Dec. 10. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and forty botanical watercolors, illustrations, engravings, and lithographs are on view; a third of them are of orchids. Among the artists represented are Pierre-Joseph Redouté, Margaret Mee, Marilena Pistoia, and Georg Dionys Ehret. . . . ¶ The skeletons of some one hundred saurischian and ornithischian dinosaurs have been cleaned and repositioned, and they're waiting for you. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"A Slice of Schiaparelli: Surrealism in Fashion." Fifty examples of the stylish inspirations of Elsa Schiaparelli (1890-1973): evening gloves with reptilian scales; a day suit with metallic ladybugs, grasshoppers, and cockroaches creeping across it; a hat of celluloid grapes; and more. . . . ¶ "Leon Polk Smith: American Painter," a retrospective of large geometrical abstractions, most of them on oddly shaped canvases, by an eighty-nine-year-old artist who was inspired sixty years ago by his first sight of a Mondrian. Through Jan. 7. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St.—"European Couples, and Others," a selection of the minimalist sculptor Dan Flavin's work from 1964 to 1978, all drawn from Dia's own collection. Thirty years ago, nothing could match the simplicity and radicalism of Flavin's reliance on a limited variety of commercially available light fixtures and colors to generate seemingly limitless variations; today his art is a keystone of the institutionalized avant-garde. These fluorescent-light sculptures appear to extraordinary advantage in Dia's antiseptic space. Most of them inhabit corners after the manner of Russian avant-garde works by the likes of Malevich and Tatlin; their glow dematerializes the plain geometry of the architecture, rendering their surroundings sensuous and atmospheric. . . . ¶ "Atlas," Gerhard Richter's gargantuan, superbly enigmatic collection of (mainly) photographs. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Change, 1890-1990," a large exhibition of paintings, sculptures, photographs, and graphic works by fifty artists, including Eric Bulatov, Léon Bakst, Marc Chagall, Ilya Kabokov, El Lissitzky, and Komar & Melamid. Through Jan. 28. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Amanaplanacanalpanama," an installation by Luis Camnitzer, includes a canal made of resin and a canal lock made of children's construction toys. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "Four Corners/Cuatro Esquinas," recent oil paintings and charcoal drawings by José Morales. Through Jan. 7. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Edvard Munch and Harald Sohlberg: Landscapes of the Mind." A feast of paintings, drawings, and prints from the Norwegian turn-of-the-century masters. Through Jan. 14. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 11:30 to 5:30; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Marcel Broodthaers (1924-76)—The whimsical Belgian Conceptualist created a little museum of his own, the "Musée d'Art Moderne: Département des Aigles." Here, one part of it, the "Section Publicité," is shown for the first time since the Documenta V exhibition, in 1972. The man was obsessed with eagles, and he gathered just about every conceivable type of aquiline imagery: coins, Nazi symbols, ancient Celtic and Indonesian sculptures, cigarette packs, photographs of tattoos. Our favorite is a reproduction of Magritte's "Ceci N'est Pas une Pipe": if it's not a pipe, it must be an eagle. Through Nov. 25. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays. . . . ¶ A show of the artist's posters and books is at Gibson, 568 Broadway, through Nov. 11. . . . ¶ Another show of Broodthaers' works is at Zwirner, 43 Greene St., through Nov. 25.)

Gordon Cook (1927-85)—This painter, influential in the San Francisco Bay Area but almost unknown outside it, specialized in still-lifes of everyday objects, rendered in dead

RICHARD MERKIN

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space and given strange, monumental significance. A pair of rubbers has the scale and the intimidating presence of hot rods; a milliner's gray-felt hat form is positively terrifying. The gallery is dominated by an Ernst-like painting of a human figure constructed from wooden sticks and blocks, which swaggers so expressively that we somehow know it's a self-portrait. Through Nov. 11. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

Janet Fish—Bravura paintings of glass objects in domestic settings. Fish's superrealism, which has become free and painterly, works especially well in the large canvases with human figures: a children's pool party, a dinner at home. Through Oct. 28. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave.)

John Gibson—Large, elegant oils of patterned spheres with polka-dot, spiral, and geodesic designs. Through Nov. 18. (Perspective, 19 E. 71st St.)

Raymond Han—Flawlessly executed, emotionally empty still-lifes. Han can paint like a demon: antique china and crystal, flowers, and quotations from Old Masters (usually in the form of postcards) occupy these refined compositions with tremendous dignity. But the effect is as irritating as a pop quiz in art history. Through Nov. 4. (Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Duncan Hannah—Oils by a Minnesota-born artist obsessed with the idyll of English youth in the postwar years. Some of the paintings, straightforwardly executed in flat washes, resemble illustrations for boys' magazines of the early nineteen-fifties; others have a more sinister edge. "Shirts and Skins," a large canvas of youngsters frolicking fleshily in a sylvan glade, is as close to prurience as to A. E. Housman; "A Girl in Winter," tightly buttoned up in her gray wool coat, stares forlornly at the viewer, lost and fearing never to be found. Through Nov. 11. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Alexander Liberman—An artist better known for his sculptures reveals in this show that he is also an accomplished watercolorist, though emphatically not of the sailboat-in-the-pond variety. Mesmerizing vortices of almost punishingly brilliant hues suck the viewer right in—or are they eyes looking back? Through Oct. 28. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jane Wilson—Vivid landscapes, in oil, by a New York-based artist. Through Nov. 11. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

"From Left to Right: Social Realism in Germany and Russia, Circa 1919-33"—A museum-quality exhibit of prints, drawings, and posters which sets works of social-realist art and propaganda from Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia side by side, to devastating effect. Although there are some famous names here (Otto Dix, George Grosz, Käthe Kollwitz), the forgotten poster artists have the most powerful impact. Nearly identical cartoons of the Western powers being smashed—in one case by Nazism, in the other by Communism—form a damning indictment of both those isms. Through Nov. 4. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Short List—Lesley Dill, George Adams, 50 W. 57th St. Through Oct. 28. . . . **Helen Frankenthaler**, Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **Grace Knowlton**, Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **Annette Lemieux**, McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 16. . . . **Ida Lorentzen**, Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Christopher Lucas**, Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **John Marin**, Kennedy, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **Faith Ringgold**, ACA, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 4.

Self-portrait by Ann Craven (Wittels).

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Ann Craven—A hundred and one small oil paintings of the moon in different phases. Through Nov. 11. (Wittels, 580 Broadway.)

"Love Flight of a Pink Candy Heart: A Compliment to Florine Stettheimer"—Curated by Michael Duncan in response to the Whitney's Stettheimer retrospective, this intelligent and imaginative group show assembles paintings, sculptures, and photographs that enlarge upon Stettheimer's insouciant aesthetic of gauze and gewgaws. The show includes some older works (three Stettheimers, a small Tchelichew, a Cornell box, and, most remarkably, a videotape of Jack Smith's 1963 drag opus, "Flaming Creatures"), but the bulk of the work is contemporary: Jane Kaplowitz, Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, Izhar Patkin, and others. Through Nov. 4. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St.)

"Pierced Hearts and True Love: A Century of Drawings for Tattoos"—In addition to hundreds of contemporary drawings and historical flash, this show offers acetate stencils, photographs, tattoo-parlor signs, tools, and paraphernalia. Among the artists represented are Sailor Jerry Collins, Horiyoshi II, Stoney St. Clair, Dainty Dotty, and Charlie Malta. Through Nov. 11. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

"Surrealism in Exile, 1938-47"—Letters, photographs, works on paper, and press clippings documenting the Parisian Surrealists' wartime emigration to New York and Mexico. Through Oct. 27. (La Maison Française, New York University, 16 Washington Mews. Closed Saturdays.)

"Raw"—Paintings, drawings, and sculpture executed in casual or slapdash ways, by Polly Apfelbaum, David Diao, Sean Landers, Paul McCarthy, and others. Through Nov. 11. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Short List—Jim Anderson, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **Radcliffe Bailey**, Beitzel, 102 Prince St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Keith Coventry**, Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through Nov. 4. . . . **John Currin**, Rosen, 130 Prince St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **Nassos Daphnis**, Castelli, 420 West Broadway; also at Zarre, 48 Greene St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **Drew Dominick**, Freire, 580 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Michael Flanagan**, P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Robert Guillot**, Shainman, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Mike Kelley**, Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **Glenn Ligon**, Protetch, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 4. . . . **Brice Marden**, Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6; through Jan. 14. . . . **Lynn McCarty**, Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through Nov. 29. . . . **Anne and Patrick Poirier**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **Robert Smithson**, Markey, 55 Vandam St. Through Nov. 4.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—Oct. 25-26: An extraordinary assemblage of jewelry from private collections, including those of Empress Eugénie of France and Archduchess Thérèse of Austria. Perhaps the 200.86-carat pear-shaped diamond will strike your fancy. . . . Oct. 27: Objects from the apartment of the late interior designer Robert Metzger. . . . Oct. 31: Manuscripts and printed material relating to American history, including a mandate signed by Abraham Lincoln regarding the separation of church and state. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Swann Galleries—An auction of Americana, both printed and in manuscript. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Oct. 26.)

Fine Crafts—A benefit auction of craftworks by forty-six contemporary artists. (American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St. 956-3535. Oct. 26 at 8.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Merry Alpern—"Dirty Windows," a series of photos that the artist took from one window looking into another—the other being the bathroom window of an illegal financial-district sex club. Through Nov. 25. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

Eugène Atget (1857-1927) and **Walker Evans** (1903-75)—A dry, intermittently compelling exhibit of fifty works, with several very fine juxtapositions. The selection—of a few interiors and public sculptures, and many architectural studies and street scenes—suffers from a lack of variety, especially in the Atgets. But there is plenty of evidence of both artists' devotion to documentation, clarity, and directness. Through Nov. 25. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

David Byrne—Beautiful photographs of banal subjects—fluorescent lights, living-room chairs, airport signs—by an artist bent on finding life in the mundane. Through Nov. 22. (Cristinerose, 395 West Broadway.)

Imogen Cunningham (1883-1976)—A survey of her long, prolific career, including portraits, figures, landscapes, cityscapes, and flowers. Through Nov. 4. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

Len Jenshel and Diane Cook—Husband and wife: one works in color, the other in black-and-white. You'd expect fireworks, but volcanoes? The pair has toured the country for the past four years and has come back with surreal and sublime volcanic landscapes, from Craters of the Moon National Monument, in Idaho, to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Through Nov. 25. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

Sally Mann—Recent photographs of the artist's family, in which the rural Virginia landscape assumes a prominent role. Through Nov. 4. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Tina Modotti (1896-1942)—Street photographs, still-lifes with puppets, and other works made in Mexico between 1923 and 1929, which reveal a unique marriage of political consciousness and formalist aesthetics. Through Nov. 4. (Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St.)

Group Show—A selection of works from Joel Meyerowitz (views of Cape Cod), Richard Schulman (artist portraits), and Eve Sonneman (large Polaroids). Through Nov. 4. (Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Feeling the Spirit: Searching the World for the People of Africa," twenty years of photographs by *Times* staff photographer Chester Higgins, Jr. Through Jan. 8. . . . ¶ Street and prison scenes and images of violence in Bogotá, Colombia, by Bastienne Schmidt. Through Jan. 8. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"The Garden of Earthly Delights: Photographs by Edward Weston and Robert Mapplethorpe." Still-lifes, nudes, and portraits, hung side by side in comparative groupings. Through Nov. 26. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—Sarah Charlesworth, Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **Margaret Morton**, Lowinsky, 578 Broadway. Through Oct. 31. . . . **John O'Reilly**, Saul, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 25. . . . **Alexander Rodchenko**, Schickler, 52 E. 76th St. Through Oct. 31. . . . **Willy Ronis**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through Oct. 28. . . . **Lorna Simpson**, Sean Kelly, 43 Mercer St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **William Wegman** and **Mark Klett**, Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 18.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum.)

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 996-1100.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Carmen, with Norah Amsellem, Sally Burgess, Sergej Larin, and Barseg Tumanyan; conducted by John Fiore. (Oct. 25 and Oct. 28 at 8.) . . . **The Queen of Spades,** by Tchaikovsky, in the opening performances of a hotly anticipated new production that includes Leonie Rysanek's depiction of the aged Countess, the house début of the baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky, and the high-voltage conducting of Valery Gergiev. The cast also includes Karita Mattila, Birgitta Svendén, Ben Heppner, Peter Kazaras, and Nikolai Putilin. (Oct. 26 and Oct. 30 at 8.) . . . **Aida,** with Andrea Gruber, Dolora Zajick, Michael Sylvester, and Timothy Noble; Christian Badea. (Oct. 27 at 8.) . . . With Ms. Gruber, Barbara Dever, Mr. Sylvester, and Sherrill Milnes; Mr. Badea. (Oct. 31 at 7:30.) . . . **Die Zauberflöte,** with Tina Kiberg, Sally Wolf, Gösta Winbergh, Mikael Melbye, and John Cheek; Peter Schneider. (Oct. 28 at 1:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—Turandot. (Oct. 25 at 8.) . . . **The Magic Flute,** performed in English. (Oct. 27 at 8.) . . . **The Mikado.** (Oct. 28 at 1:30.) . . . **Carmen.** (Oct. 28 at 8.) . . . **La Bohème.** (Oct. 29 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "Don Giovanni." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Oct. 28 at 7:30 and Oct. 29 at 2:30. Through Nov. 19.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Christian Thielemann conducts Schoenberg's symphonic poem "Pelleas und Melisande" and Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 (with Vladimir Feltsman). (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 26-28 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 7:30.)

BBC Symphony Orchestra—Founded in 1930 as London's first permanent orchestra (an oddity in that city of freelance ensembles), this group has long been a friend to new music. It commissioned Elliott Carter's "Adagio Tenebroso," premièred it in September, 1995, and now brings it back to American shores for its first New York performance, conducted by Andrew Davis. Completing the program are Shostakovich's A-Minor Violin Concerto (with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg) and Brahms's Symphony No. 4. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 25 at 8.)

St. Paul Chamber Orchestra—Hugh Wolff conducts Rossini's "L'Italiana in Algeri" Overture, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4 (the "Italian"), and Stravinsky's "Pulcinella" (with soprano Paula Rasmussen, tenor Gran Wilson, and bass-baritone Jan Opalach). (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Korean Chamber Ensemble—The modestly scaled orchestra offers Elgar's Introduction and Allegro, Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony, Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 (with Young Uck Kim), and Byung-Dong Paik's "Youlmok." (92nd Street Y. Oct. 25 at 8.)

"Voices of Light"—The Camerata Chorale, members of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and several soloists perform this new oratorio-like work by Richard Einhorn, which will accompany a screening of "The Passion of Joan of Arc," Carl Dreyer's 1927 silent film. Lucinda Carver directs. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Oct. 25 and Oct. 28 at 8.)

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, Lorin Maazel conducting. The Pittsburgh, which hits the century mark this year, brings its experience to bear on an unusual mix of works. Oct. 27 at 8: Morton Gould's "Classical Variations," Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, Silvio Mercadante's E-Minor Flute Concerto, and Mr. Maazel's "Music for Flute and Orchestra" (the latter two featuring James Galway). . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 8: Act III of Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde," in a concert performance with soprano Carol Yahr and tenor Heinz Kruse, among others. (Does Mr. Maazel know something the Met doesn't? The big house currently finds it uncastable.)

Camerata Bern—Violinist Thomas Zehetmair stands center stage for a performance of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons." Oboist Heinz Holliger joins him for Bach's Double Concerto (BWV 1060), and the string ensemble plays Schoenberg's "Verklärte Nacht." (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Oct. 28 at 8.)

American Composers Orchestra—Paul Lustig Dunkel conducts Melinda Wagner's "Falling Angels," John Harbison's Flute Concerto (with Ransom Wilson), George Antheil's "Music to a World's Fair Film," and Nicolas Roussakis's "To Demeter." All but the first work are premières—curiously so in the case of the Antheil, since it was composed in 1939, for a film that was withdrawn before it could hit the screens at the New York World's Fair. Long given up for lost, the score recently resurfaced in the collection of the Free Library of Pennsylvania. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 29 at 3.)

St. Petersburg Symphony—Alexander Dmitriev conducts the orchestra in Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 and Piano Concerto No. 1 (featuring Hae-Jung Kim). (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 29 at 7:30.)

American Symphony Chamber Orchestra—Leon Botstein conducts the première of Richard Wilson's "Panietam" (a setting of poems by Leopold Staff and Mieczyslaw Jastrun, here featuring mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart), Mozart's D-Major Piano Concerto (K. 451, with Mr. Wilson as soloist), and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 30 at 8.)

St. Thomas Choir and Orchestra of St. Luke's—Gerre Hancock directs the St. Thomas Choir

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of Men and Boys, plus soloists, in Honegger's imposing oratorio "King David." The narrator will be John Andrew, who is in his final year as the church's rector. Also on the program are Stravinsky's Mass and Hindemith's Concerto for Organ and Chamber Orchestra (featuring Patrick Allen). (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 3027. Oct. 31 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

Putting On Ayres—Soprano Emma Kirkby and lutenist Anthony Rooley, touring under the rubric "The Theatre of Music," perform "ayres" from Restoration England, by Purcell, Matthew Locke, John Blow, and others. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Hilliard Ensemble—The members of this men's vocal quartet stumbled across the Codex Speciálník—a Prague manuscript compiled circa 1500—while researching English Renaissance music. Their recent recording (on the ECM label) of twenty-five of the collection's hundred and fifty pieces forms a well-rounded, beautifully performed travelogue of European musical styles of the era, all of which seem to have been represented in Renaissance Bohemia. In this concert, the ensemble will perform sacred works from that disk, by composers well known (Josquin des Pres), not so well known (John Plummer, Petrus de Grudencz), and unknown (the ubiquitous and multitalented Anonymous). Presented by Music Before 1800. (Church of the Blessed Sacrament, 152 W. 71st St. Oct. 26 at 8. For information about tickets, call 666-9266.)

Waverly Consort—In a concert styled as an adjunct to the Metropolitan Museum's John Singleton Copley exhibition, the ensemble explores music written or performed in New England between about 1750 and 1850. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 28 at 7.)

New York Festival of Song—Art songs, folk songs, and theatre songs, sung in Yiddish and Hebrew, trace the route of the twentieth-century diaspora through the music of Ravel, Milhaud, Mahler, Shostakovich, Rodrigo, and Bernstein. (92nd Street Y. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Chinese Premières—By which we mean new musical works, not governing officials. In this concert, soprano Rao Lan, Chinese-flute player Chen Tao, and pi-pa player Min Xiaofen give works by seven Chinese composers their first hearing. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—The Society assumes a French accent, offering Debussy's "En Blanc et Noir" (for two pianos) and Violin Sonata, Poulenc's Cello Sonata, and Fauré's Piano Quintet No. 1. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Oct. 29 at 5 and Oct. 31 at 7:30.)

Valery Kuleshov—The Russian pianist, who took the silver medal two summers ago at the ninth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, in Fort Worth, will perform the Bach-Busoni D-Minor Chaconne, four sonatas by Scarlatti, Scriabin's Sonata No. 9 (plus a pair of études), and three works by Liszt: "Sonetto 104 del Petrarca," "Réminiscences de 'Norma,'" and his fleet-fingered transcription of Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre." (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 31 at 8.)

Clarion Concerts—Though it's most strongly associated with lesser known Baroque music, Clarion Concerts (founded thirty-nine years ago by Newell Jenkins) has a better than passing acquaintance with contemporary compositions (almost always of a conservative stripe). The two mix on this program, which comprises the première of a cycle of poems by James Merrill set to music by Daron Hagen (who will accompany countertenor Charles Maxwell) and a generous offering of songs by Purcell (in which a small instrumental ensemble will assist soprano Nancy Armstrong). (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Oct. 31 at 8.)

Guarneri and Orion String Quartets—Members of the two ensembles join to play Mozart's C-Major Quintet (K. 515), Shostakovich's Prelude and Scherzo (Op. 11, for octet), and Dvořák's A-Major Sextet (Op. 48). (92nd Street Y. Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at 8.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

Festival Chamber Music Society: Duets and quintets by Mozart, Alexandre Tansman, Brahms, and Anton Reicha. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 26 at 8.) . . . **Marimolin:** The violin-and-marimba duo, in music by Steven Mackey and Paul Lansky. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 26 at 8.) . . . **Cello:** Four of them, actually, playing arrangements from Boccherini, Bartók, and Lennon-McCartney, among others. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. Oct. 29 at 11 A.M. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.) . . . **Scott St. John:** Violinist, with Ilan Rechtman, harpsichord, and Iris Reger, cello. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Oct. 29 at noon.) . . . **New York Philharmonic Ensembles:** Works by Lukas Foss, Hindemith, and Mendelssohn. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 29 at 3.) . . . **New York Chamber Ensemble:** In works by Mozart, Berg (his Chamber Concerto), and Dvořák. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Oct. 29 at 3.) . . . **Leonardo Trio:** Piano trios by Schubert, William Thomas McKinley, and Smetana. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 31 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

New Yorkers Wear Black—"Tonight is the night," Harry Behn wrote (and schoolchildren memorized), "when dead leaves fly like witches on switches across the sky, when elf and sprite flit through the night on a moony sheen. . . . It's Hallowe'en." Oct. 28 at 8: The words of Edgar Allan Poe tintinnabulate again. While the organ plays at St. Ann's Church in Brooklyn Heights, Allen Ginsberg reads "The Bells," Diamanda Galas takes on "The Black Cat," and Lou Reed handles "The Tell-Tale Heart." (157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424.) . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 4: After a costume parade, kids light their jack-o'-lanterns and set them afloat on the Harlem Meer. (Central Park, 110th St. near Fifth Ave. For more information, call 860-1370.) . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 6: Marchers in the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade begin assembling in their costumes, on Sixth Ave., from Canal St. to Spring St. For those who like to watch, the parade begins at 7, proceeding north on Sixth Ave. to 22nd St. For more information, call the parade hot line at 475-3333, ext. 4300.

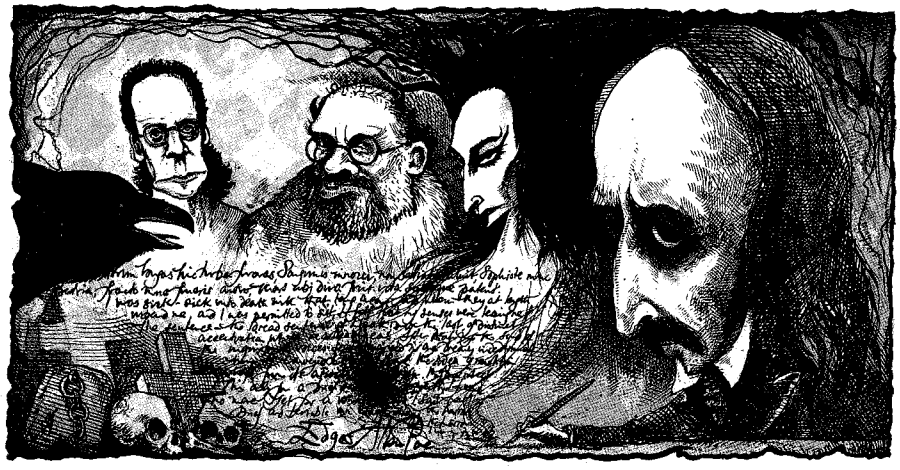
To Keep Out the Devils—Madison Square Garden wards off evil over the Halloween weekend with the first New York Garlic Festival. You can sample specialties from Burma, Italy, and the theatre district, and indulge in a surprising range of other garlicky cuisine (such as garlic ice cream). (Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. Oct. 27, from 5 to 11; Oct. 28, from noon to 11; and Oct. 29, from noon to 8. For more information, call 1-800 964-2754.)

Lame Duck—"Pomp Duck and Circumstance," a pricey German-export dinner circus now playing in DeWitt Clinton Park, extends a brisk welcome that quickly wears thin: over the first course, our waiter whispered, "Don't get too tired. It's going to take a vile before you leave." He wasn't kidding. The program consists of beer-hall shtick involving clumsy waiters sandwiched between efficient and vaguely sadomasochistic acrobatic acts. Amid this mayhem, a meal is served: soup, salmon lasagne, duck, a portion of veggies the hue of a boiled Italian flag. The off-color jokes might have been borrowed from cocktail napkins; the sight gags, somehow, get lost in translation; and the freak-show ambience seems to arise from an ethnic insensitivity that makes one uncomfortable in a production so German. (Eleventh Ave. at 53rd St. 979-9880. Through March 31.)

Readings—Oct. 25 at 7: Jamaican poets Lorna Goodison and Linton Kwesi Johnson read from their work. (Hostos Community College, 149th St. at Grand Concourse, the Bronx. For reservations, call 249-8950, ext. 369.) . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 7: W. S. Merwin reads from his poetry. (The New School, 66 W. 12th St. For more information, call the Academy of American Poets at 274-0343.) . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 7: Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai reads from his work. (D'Agostino Hall, New York University, 108 W. 3rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 8: Novelist and screenwriter Richard Price will read from his novels and screen the film versions, at the New York Public Library's Writers and Films series. (Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 8: Umberto Eco will read from his work. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Talks—Oct. 25 at 8 A.M.: Her Excellency Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, the President of Sri Lanka, chats with Asia Society president Nicholas Platt over breakfast. (Park Ave. at 70th St. For reservations, call 517-2742.) . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 6:30: Mystery writers Michael Connelly, Sue Grafton, Walter Mosley, and Robert B. Parker discuss the work of Raymond Chandler and how it led them to a life of crime. (Time-Life Auditorium, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 6: Casey Kasem, the father of the countdown format, spins through the history of Top Forty radio. (Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. 621-6709.) . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 8: Ethnographer Robert Deutsch reveals research methods for getting to subconscious public opinion. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 229-5353.)

Tours—Oct. 28 at 1: Historian Jeff Richman visits Horace Greeley, Boss Tweed, Samuel F. B. Morse, Louis Tiffany, and other residents of the Greenwood Cemetery. For more information, call 1-718 788-8500. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 1: Big Onion Walking Tours crosses the Brooklyn Bridge for an amble through Brooklyn Heights, the city's first suburb. For more information, call 439-1090.



Reed reads, Ginsberg rings, Galas howls, in a night of Poe, at St. Ann's.

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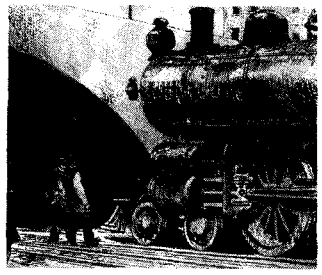

Edward Hopper, *The Locomotive*, etching, 1923.

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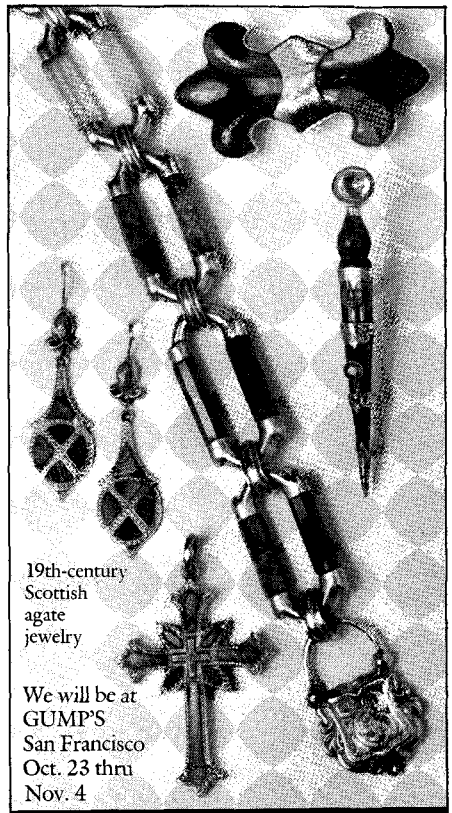

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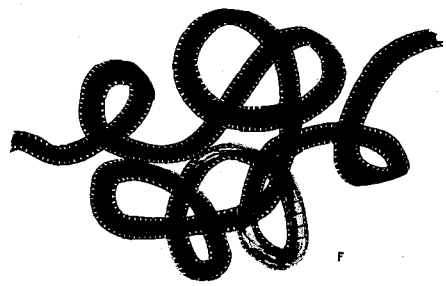


FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Copycat—A San Francisco police detective (Holly Hunter) turns to an agoraphobic criminal psychologist (Sigourney Weaver) for help in solving a string of murders, in a thriller directed by Jon Amiel. Written by Ann Biderman and David Madsen. Opening October 27. (Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Dear Babe—Rosanne Ehrlich's documentary, about an American soldier in the Second World War, is based on the letters her father wrote home from Europe between 1943 and 1945. Opening October 27. (Quad Cinema.)

The Doom Generation—A black comedy written and directed by Gregg Araki, in which three teen-agers go on the run after botching a convenience-store robbery. Opening October 25. (Angelika Film Center.)

Harlem Diary: Nine Voices of Resilience—A documentary featuring footage by nine youths, each of whom used a video camera to record several months in his or her life. Directed by Jonathan Stack. Written by Terry Williams. Opening October 27. (Quad Cinema.)

Leaving Las Vegas—Nicolas Cage plays an alcoholic and Elisabeth Shue the prostitute he moves in with, in a drama written and directed by Mike Figgis, from the 1990 novel by John O'Brien. Opening October 27. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Lessons of Darkness—Werner Herzog's documentary on the 1991 Gulf War. Opening October 25. (Film Forum 1.)

Mighty Aphrodite—A romantic comedy written and directed by Woody Allen. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening October 27. (19th Street East 6, Cinema I, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Powder—Sean Patrick Flanery plays a preternaturally pale teen-ager with a giant I.Q., who has been raised in rural isolation, from which he emerges when his grandparents die and he is taken to a small Texas town. With Jeff Goldblum and Mary Steenburgen. Written and directed by Victor Salva. Opening October 27. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, and Embassy 3.)

Spike & Mike's Festival of Animation '95—Fifteen short films, including Alison Snowden and David Fine's "Bob's Birthday" and Nick Park's "The Wrong Trousers." Opening October 27. (Cinema Village.)

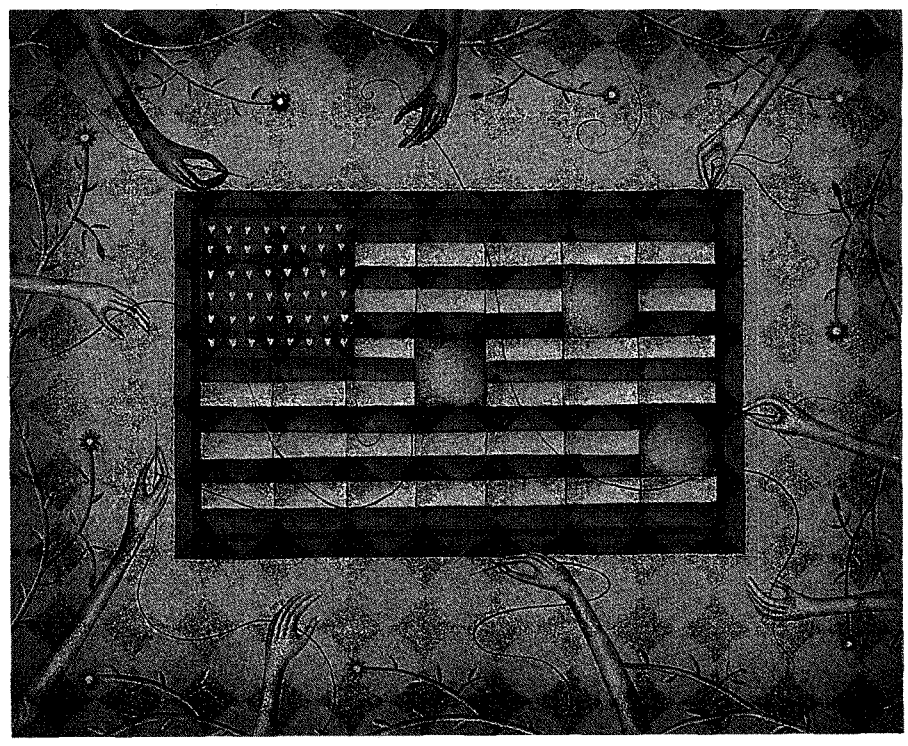
Three Wishes—A romantic adventure set in 1955, starring Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio as a young mother and Patrick Swayze as a magical drifter. Directed by Martha Coolidge. Written by Elizabeth Anderson. Opening October 27. (Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Vampire in Brooklyn—Eddie Murphy joins Angela Bassett and Kadeem Hardison in a comic horror movie directed by Wes Craven ("A Nightmare on Elm Street"). Opening October 27. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, and Embassy 4.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 28.)

Assassins—What made Richard Donner's "Lethal Weapon" movies so enjoyable was the over-the-top hysteria of the action scenes. Here Donner goes for a more subdued, artistic pitch, and though the film is well crafted it's a rather drab thriller. Sylvester Stallone plays a hit man who wants to retire (he broods



HAYDEN CORNINER

"How to Make an American Quilt."

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nicely), Antonio Banderas is his up-and-coming rival, and Julianne Moore is a surveillance expert who loves her cat and spies on her neighbors. The plot concerns a computer disk that she is selling, but it's just an excuse for everyone to pick up guns and start shooting. (Since this is an art film, silencers are used most of the time.) A cool languor develops between Stallone and Moore, and Banderas gives a cackling, exuberant performance, but the glum, pensive mood never lifts.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Augustin—An intriguing if rather clinical French comedy. Jean-Chrétien Sibertin-Blanc plays the title character, a Portuguese-French clerk who catalogues brain deaths for an insurance company and acts in his spare time (his biggest roles to date have been in an insecticide commercial and a wretched-sounding play called "Better Off Deaf"). Augustin is perfectly functional but virtually autistic in his misreading of the emotional tenor of every situation he gets into: he laughs when he should be serious and gives a hilariously dry, affectless audition for the role of an enraged cuckold. Stripped of all sentimentality, he's a modern clown—never aware, not even for a moment, of his loneliness. Written and directed by Anne Fontaine. In French.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Blue in the Face—Wayne Wang and Paul Auster's low-budget movie presents itself as a loosely organized sketchbook of neighborhood life in Brooklyn—a collection of doodles in the margins of "Smoke" (which Auster wrote and Wang directed). One of the earlier film's stars, Harvey Keitel, and several of its supporting actors play improvised skits with a bunch of celebrity drop-ins, among them Michael J. Fox, Lily Tomlin, Jim Jarmusch, Roseanne, and Madonna. The movie also includes interview footage, little documentary essays on Brooklyn lore, and a musical number or two—oddball stuff that the filmmakers combine with the salvageable fragments of improvisation in a deliberately messy, random-seeming assemblage. The pointlessness would be vastly more appealing if Wang and Auster didn't make such a point of it. Also with Lou Reed, who—playing himself and speaking directly to the camera—is the weirdest, funniest character on the screen.—T.R. (10/23/95) (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Dead Presidents—Albert and Allen Hughes's first film, "Menace II Society," was an exciting blast of ghetto life, loaded with edgy humor that masked a deeper, more thoughtful despair. Their new picture—about a young black man's journey from the Bronx to Vietnam and back again—is an ambitious misfire. In the early scenes, which introduce the main character (Larenz Tate) and his friends and family, the Hugheses find a natural humor and a soulful rhythm. Then the friends ship off to Vietnam, are hardened by the insanity they live through there, return to an America that offers them little opportunity, and turn to crime. Although the movie is disjointed, the filmmakers pull off some bravura sequences (the armored-car robbery at the end is spectacular), and they know how to get a scene moving and build on it with a Scorsese-like sweep. Tate, Keith David, and Bokeem Woodbine put a great deal of heart into their performances, but because the characters are little more than types, the film turns into one more indict-the-system polemic with little emotional pull.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 2. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Oct. 26.)

Devil in a Blue Dress—Denzel Washington plays Easy Rawlins, the hero of Walter Mosley's popular detective novels. The action takes place in 1948; Easy, an unemployed veteran, reluctantly agrees to help a shady-looking white man (Tom Sizemore) locate a woman who may be lying low in one of L.A.'s black neighborhoods. The movie, written and directed by Carl Franklin ("One False Move"), is the most enjoyable private-eye film in a

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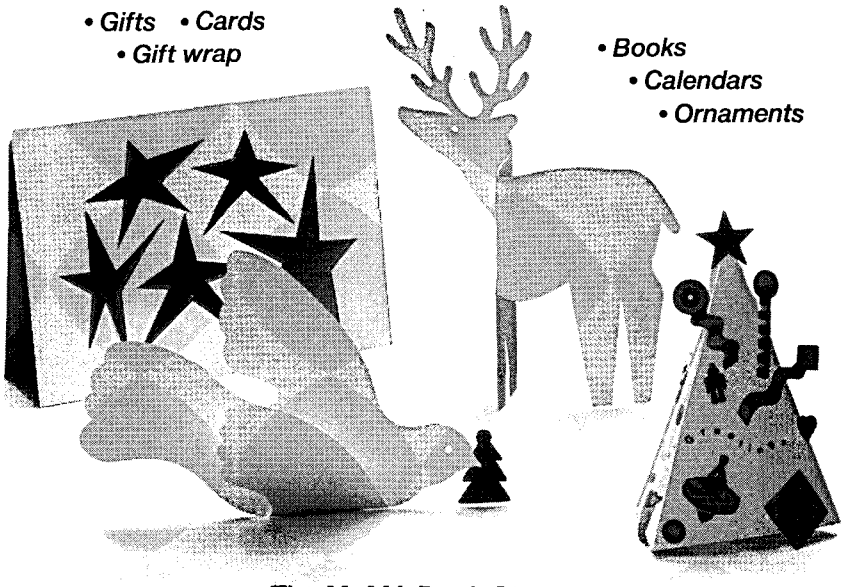

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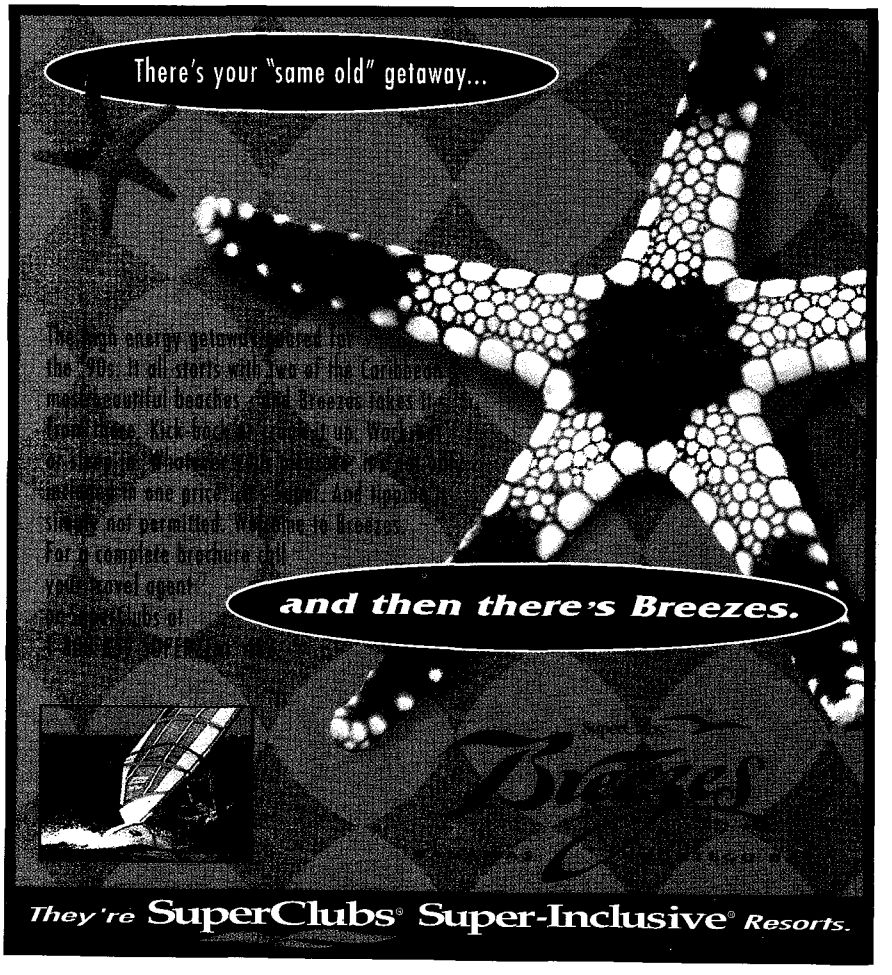

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long time: a modest, skillful, unfussy genre piece that tells an exciting story and lets its more serious concerns remain just below the surface. Also with Jennifer Beals and Don Cheadle (who does a virtuoso comic turn as Easy's homicidal sidekick, Mouse).—T.R. (10/2/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Get Shorty—John Travolta plays Chili Palmer, a small-time Miami loan shark who winds up in Hollywood, where he discovers his true métier and fulfills his destiny: he becomes a movie producer. Scott Frank's screenplay is based on an Elmore Leonard novel, and, wisely, it preserves the book's corkscrew plotting and lifts a fair amount of dialogue right off the page. The director, Barry Sonnenfeld, doesn't have the dexterity to trap the story's tiny, quick ironies; he works too strenuously for laughs. But Travolta's no-sweat acting—which deftly captures the dry comic tone of Leonard's prose—keeps the movie watchable. Just as Chili's unflappability enables him to outsmart the rich and the powerful, the star's sweet-natured assurance allows Travolta to survive the movie's over-all hysteria. He wafts through the picture like a cool breeze in a climate of hot air. Also with Rene Russo, Gene Hackman, Danny DeVito, Delroy Lindo, and Dennis Farina.—T.R. (10/23/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

How to Make an American Quilt—Winona Ryder plays Finn, a graduate student who spends the summer at the rural California home of her grandmother (Ellen Burstyn) and her great-aunt (Anne Bancroft), interviewing members of a quilting circle for her thesis and deciding whether to marry her down-to-earth boyfriend. The movie grew out of a real-life master's thesis (by Whitney Otto) that became a best-seller, and it still feels heavier on concept than on story. The characters represent possible paths of womanhood: there's a lonely widow (Kate Nelligan), a thwarted housewife (Lois Smith), a free spirit (Alfre Woodard)—everything but a lesbian. Saying that Ryder was born to play the self-conscious, narcissistic Finn is not exactly praise. Also with Maya Angelou. Script by Jane Anderson; directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse ("Proof").—S.K. (34th St. East, Baronet, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Jade—Writer Joe Eszterhas's follow-up to his "Showgirls" fiasco is every bit as hopeless, and this time he takes some good actors down with him. David Caruso plays a prosecutor investigating a gruesome murder, which may have been committed by an old flame (Linda Fiorentino) who has since married a tough defense attorney (Chazz Palminteri). The story is ridiculous: the victim, a millionaire, collected pubic hair from his conquests, and one such specimen—from a woman named Jade—intrigues the detective, who searches for her and learns that her sexual specialty was . . . Eszterhas should get a grip. So should the director, William Friedkin, who provides not one but two car chases through San Francisco (now there's a novelty) in the hope of pumping in some energy. Nothing that he or the actors try builds suspense or makes any sense. Eszterhas may be fixated on money, power, and sex, but his scripts are cheap, humorless, and limp.—B.D. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, Waverly, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Astor Plaza.)

Les Misérables—Jean-Paul Belmondo stars in Claude Lelouch's adaptation of Victor Hugo's 1862 novel, updated to the Nazi occupation of France. In French. (Lincoln Square.)

Never Talk to Strangers—A criminal psychologist (Rebecca De Mornay) assigned to investigate a series of murders falls in love with a mysterious stranger (Antonio Banderas), in a thriller directed by Peter Hall. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Scarlet Letter—Roland Joffé directs Douglas Day Stewart's adaptation of Hawthorne's masterpiece. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, and Lincoln Square. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through Oct. 26.)

Seven—The murders in David Fincher's serial-killer mystery are grisly tableaux, each artfully arranged to illustrate one of the seven deadly sins. This kind of self-conscious literary conceit can work if it's handled with a light, parodic touch, but the movie's clammy design and glum cinematography try to persuade us that what we're watching is a serious meditation on the nature of evil. The police detectives are Morgan Freeman, as weary old Somerset, and Brad Pitt, as brash young Mills; Freeman, with his immense dignity and authority, manages to keep his head above water, but Pitt goes under.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema II, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Strange Days—The year 2000 is hours away, the streets of Los Angeles are erupting with civil strife, and ex-cop Lenny Nero (Ralph Fiennes) has just received what appears to be evidence of police racism, rape, and murder. (The movie is like a mad fantasia on the Rodney King episode.) Enlisting the help of Max (Tom Sizemore) and Mace (Angela Bassett), Lenny sets out to crack the case. But for the director, Kathryn Bigelow, the case is mainly an excuse to let it rip. This is her loudest, relentlessly wired rebellious movie to date. Some of the actors head straight over the top, too—Juliette Lewis is unwatchable in the role of Lenny's old girlfriend. But Fiennes holds steady; his moody, lonely performance lends the story an air of calm despair. Screenplay by James Cameron and Jay Cocks.—A.L. (10/9/95) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

To Die For—Director Gus Van Sant's latest movie is his funniest, but also his least adventurous. Adapted by Buck Henry from Joyce Maynard's 1992 novel, it tells the story of Suzanne Stone (Nicole Kidman), a suburban nobody who, bored with her husband (Matt Dillon), decides to become a somebody in the world of television. She joins a local station, starts to shoot a documentary about three schoolkids, and gradually lures them into her web. The film is smartly structured, but Van Sant's touch is uncertain: the story's satirical bite begins to loosen as his camera lingers more and more on the plain, disaffected teen-agers. One of them is played by Joaquin Phoenix, whose brother River was so extraordinary in "My Own Private Idaho"; it's as though Van Sant longed to recapture the wayward, carnal atmosphere of the earlier movie but found himself locked in a smaller, more brittle project.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

ALSO PLAYING

The Addiction: Angelika Film Center. . . . **Babe** (reviewed in our issue of 9/4/95): 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **Belle de Jour:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **The Big Green:** 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . **Braveheart** (6/5/95): Manhattan Twin. . . . **The Brothers McMullen:** Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **Clockers** (9/18/95): 59th Street East Cinema, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin. . . . **Congo:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Crumb** (5/1/95): Film Forum 3. . . . **Feast of July:** Village East Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, and Lincoln Square. . . . **Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **The Innocent:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Jeffrey:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Kicking and Screaming:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **Mallrats:** Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **Messenger:** Quad Cinema. . . . **A Month by the Lake:** Village East Cinemas and Plaza. . . . **Moonlight and Valentino:** Tower East. . . . **Nadja:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **The Net** (8/7/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Nine Months** (7/24/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Now and Then:** Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . **Persuasion** (9/25/95): Paris. . . . **The Postman:** Eastside Playhouse, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **Showgirls** (10/9/95): Manhattan Twin and Criterion Center. . . . **Smoke:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **Talk:** Quad Cinema. . . . **To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar** (9/11/95): Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **Unstrung Heroes:** Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . **Unzipped:** Cinema 3. . . . **The Usual Suspects** (8/14/95): Village Theatre VII, New York Twin, and Lincoln Square. . . . **A Walk in the Clouds:** Worldwide Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM.)

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th St.
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th St.
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th St.
Plaza, 42 E. 58th St.
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th St.
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th St.
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th St.
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th St.
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th St.
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st St.
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 3, 209 W. Houston St.
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St.
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Olympia 1 and II, Broadway at 107th St.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
Embassy 1, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.

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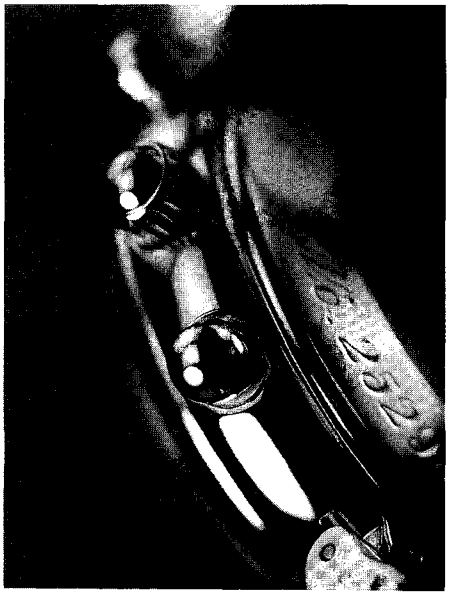

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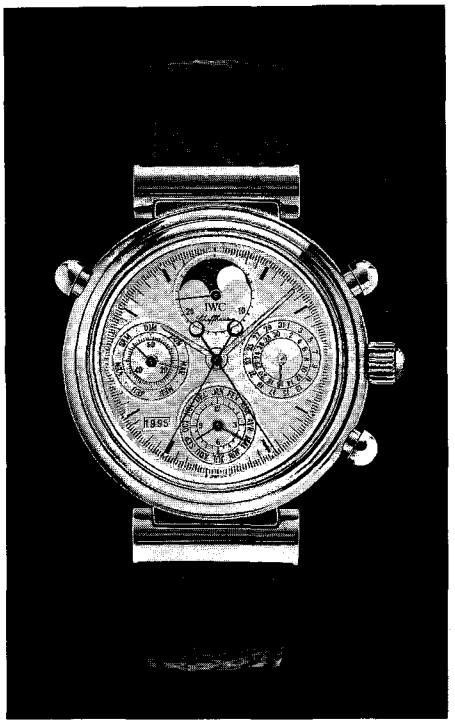

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REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Black Is . . . Black Ain't (1994)—The late Marlon T. Riggs's intimate documentary is politically engaged and aesthetically intriguing. The producer-director creates a bristling collage-like surface (including abstract images, snatches of modern dance, and written quotations from Zora Neale Hurston and others) that suits his call for elastic definitions of black identity. His ruling metaphor for African-Americanism is his mother's gumbo, and you can view his movie as a gumbo, too, savoring its over-all taste even if you're not crazy about some of the individual ingredients. Co-producer Nicole Atkinson, co-director Christiane Badgley, and editor Bob Paris completed it according to Riggs's notes after the filmmaker died of AIDS, on April 5, 1994, at the age of thirty-seven. The statements recorded from his hospital bed are free of sentimentality or special pleading: his last work testifies to his exuberant toughness.—M.S. (Whitney Museum; Oct. 26 and 28.)

Body Snatchers (1994)—Pod creatures from outer space once again steal human identities and establish a community of alien conformists, this time on a military base. Unfortunately, the director, Abel Ferrara, is too literal (and inept) to detonate the satirical dilemma of distinguishing humanoids from regular military personnel. Although the movie could only tickle audiences unfamiliar with either the 1956 or the 1978 "Invasion of the Body Snatchers," you'd have to know those films to understand what's happening in this one. With Terry Kinney, Meg Tilly, Gabrielle Anwar, and Reilly Murphy as members of a threatened nuclear family; Forest Whitaker makes a brief appearance as a worried medical officer.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 29.)

Crime Story (1986)—Cars with fins and cops with teeth. In the righteous feature-length pilot for the ambitious TV series, set in the sixties, Abel Ferrara, the director, clicked with a team assembled by Michael Mann, the executive producer; they tell a crackling story of urban connections and betrayals. A crusading, rule-breaking detective (Dennis Farina) orders the Major Crimes Unit of the Chicago P.D. to ferret out a dangerous new crew. The trail leads to a fledgling mafioso (Anthony Denison) and a cocky Irish kid (David Caruso) who happens to be the son of the hero's surrogate parents. The movie exploits a volatile mix of styles: the serious guys wear fedoras and the tyros go out in ducktail haircuts; Del Shannon and Johnny Mathis collide on the soundtrack; age-old Sicilian traditions unravel in seedy social clubs and in a suburban estate with space-age décor. It all adds up to a hypermasculine world on the eve of destruction. Caruso is Cagneyesque; the amazing cast also includes William Russ, Darlanne Fluegel, and Stephen Lang.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 28.)

Eyes Without a Face (1959)—This famous film by Georges Franju opened in this country on double bills in a dubbed version called "The Horror Chamber of Dr. Faustus," but it's perhaps the most austerely elegant horror film ever made. Franju called it "a poetic fantasy," and it's a symbolist attack on the ethics of scientists. Though in its way it's as simple-minded as the usual romantic young poet's denunciations of war or commerce, it has a vague, floating, lyric sense of dread which goes beyond the simpler effects of horror movies that don't make intellectual claims. Franju's approach is almost as purified and as mystic as Bresson's. The story is about a surgeon (Pierre Brasseur) who, in systematic experiments, removes the faces of beautiful young kidnapped women and tries to graft them onto the ruined head of his daughter (Edith Scob). He keeps failing, the girls are destroyed, yet he persists, in a terrible parody of the scientific method. In the end, the daughter—still only eyes without a face—liberates the baying hounds on which he has also been experimenting, and they tear off *his* head. The film is both bizarrely sophisticated (with Alida Valli as the mad surgeon's mistress, doing the kidnapping in a black leather coat) and ridiculously naïve (in its plot elements). In French.—P.K. (Symphony Space; Oct. 31.)

Fran (1985)—She's a woman who can't live without a man; she finds guys and clings to them. Her neediness ferments in this Australian kitchen-sink drama. It offers socio- and psycho-babbly reasons for her problem: she grew up without a father and with an alcoholic mother; she distrusts authority; her saloon-oriented culture curtails emotional exploration. To top off this slice of stale life, her latest boyfriend starts fondling her daughter. It all makes for a very long ninety-four minutes. The writer-director, Glenda Hambly, won an Australian Film Institute award for the script; Noni Hazlehurst (Fran) and Annie Byron (her close friend) won prizes for best actress and supporting actress.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 27 and 29.)

The Plumber (1979)—Written and directed by Peter Weir, this opaque parable takes place in the heart of Australian art-film territory. It pits the anthropologist wife of an overworked medical researcher against a scruffy plumber who insists that her pipes will explode unless he fixes them. She tries to drive him out by playing tapes of New Zealand tribal chants and correcting his grammar, which *really* crazes him. Her hatred for the man is rooted in her fear of what he represents—probably the unruliness of life. Amid the cryptic dialogue and blatant shocks, there's an amusing sketch of stilted academics at the dinner table.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 30-31.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Oct. 25: "Blanche Fury" (1948, Marc Allégret) and "Saraband for Dead Lovers" (1948, Basil Dearden and Michael Relph). . . . Oct. 26: "Dear Murderer" (1947, Arthur Crabtree) and "Good Time Girl" (1948, David Macdonald). . . . Oct. 27: "Time Without Pity" (1957, Joseph Losey) and "All Night Long" (1962, Dearden). . . . Oct. 28-29: "Dead of Night" (1945) and "The Night Has Eyes" (1942, Leslie Arliss). . . . Oct. 30: "The Spider and the Fly" (1949, Robert Hamer) and "The Long Memory" (1952, Hamer). . . . Oct. 31: "Spellbound" (1940, John Harlow) and "A Place of One's Own" (1944, Bernard Knowles).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Films by the Greek director Pantelis Voulgaris. Most of the films are in Greek, with English subtitles. Oct. 26 at 2:30: "The Thief" (1965) and "The Engagement of Anna" (1972). . . . Oct. 26 at 5:30: "Eleftherios Venizelos" (1980). . . . Oct. 26 at 8:30: "Dance of the Goats" (1971) and "The Great Love Songs" (1973). . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 3 and 6: "Ms. Conceptions" (1995), a documentary. . . . ¶ A series of films from Australia. Oct. 27 at 2:30 and Oct. 28 at 5: "My Brilliant Career" (1979, Gillian Armstrong). . . . Oct. 27 at 6 and Oct. 29 at 5: "Fran" (†). . . . Oct. 27 at 8 and Oct. 28 at 2: "Jedda" (1955, Charles Chauvel). . . . Oct. 29 at 2 and Oct. 30 at 6: "Australian Dream" (1987, Jacki McKimmie). . . . Oct. 30 at 2:30 and Oct. 31 at 6: "The Plumber" (†). . . . Oct. 31 at 2:30: "The Devil's Playground" (1976, Fred Schepisi). . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 3, 6, and 8; Oct. 28-29 at 2 and 5; and Oct. 30 at 2 and 6: A retrospective of the works of Stan Brakhage.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—Oct. 25 at 2 and 4 and Oct. 26 at 2, 4, and 8:45: "Germany, Year Zero" (1947, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian). . . . ¶ A program of independent Japanese films; all in Japanese, with English subtitles. Oct. 27 at 2 and 6:30 and Oct. 28 at 4 and 8:30: "Farewell, Japan" (1994, Yukihiko Tsutsumi). . . . Oct. 27 at 4:15 and 8:45 and Oct. 29 at 6:15: "The Gentle Twelve" (1992, Shun Nakahara). . . . Oct. 28 at 6:15 and Oct. 30 at 4 and 8:15: "Wizard of Darkness" (1995, Shimako Sato). . . . Oct. 29 at 4 and 8:15 and Oct. 30 at 2 and 6:15: "Sukiyaki" (1995, Junichi Suzuki). . . . Oct. 31 at 2: "Ruffians" (1994, Teruo Ishii). . . . Oct. 31 at 4: "Breakable" (1993, Takayoshi Yamaguchi). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Oct. 28-29 at 2: "Beetlejuice" (1988, Tim Burton).

At MOMA, a festival of Australian films.

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Television shows by the team of William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. Through Oct. 29: "Huckleberry Hound" and "Jonny Quest.". . . ¶ James Dean's television appearances. Through Nov. 19: "The Bells of Cockaigne" (1953) and "Sentence of Death" (1953).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—Films and television works directed by Abel Ferrara. Oct. 28 at 12:30: Interviews done by Ferrara for a proposed TV show, "FBI Files.". . . Oct. 28 at 2: "Fear City" (1984). . . . Oct. 28 at 4: "Crime Story" (†). . . . Oct. 28 at 5:15: "China Girl" (1987). . . . Oct. 29 at 2: "King of New York" (1990). . . . Oct. 29 at 4: "Body Snatchers" (†). . . . Oct. 29 at 6: "Cat Chaser" (1988).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Oct. 29 at 7, the feature will be "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" (1962, Robert Aldrich).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Oct. 31 at 7: "The Night of the Hunter" (1955, Charles Laughton). . . . Oct. 31 at 8:45: "Eyes Without a Face" (†).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Oct. 31 at 12:30 and 6: "Full Moon in Paris" (1984, Eric Rohmer; in French). . . . Oct. 31 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Pauline at the Beach" (1982, Rohmer; in French).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Oct. 25 at 3: "Mystery Train" (1989, Jim Jarmusch). . . . Oct. 26 at 3 and 6 and Oct. 28 at 1 and 4: "Black Is . . . Black Ain't" (†). . . . Oct. 27 at 3 and Oct. 29 at 1 and 4: "Adynata" (1983, Leslie Thornton), "Heaven, Earth, & Hell" (1993, Thomas Allen Harris), and three short films.

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.—The 12th Israel Film Festival, through Nov. 2 (except Fridays), will show feature, documentary, and short films. Among those being shown are "Passover Fever," directed by Shemi Zarhin, and "Under the Domin Tree," directed by Eli Cohen. (For information about other titles and schedules, call 644-4151.)

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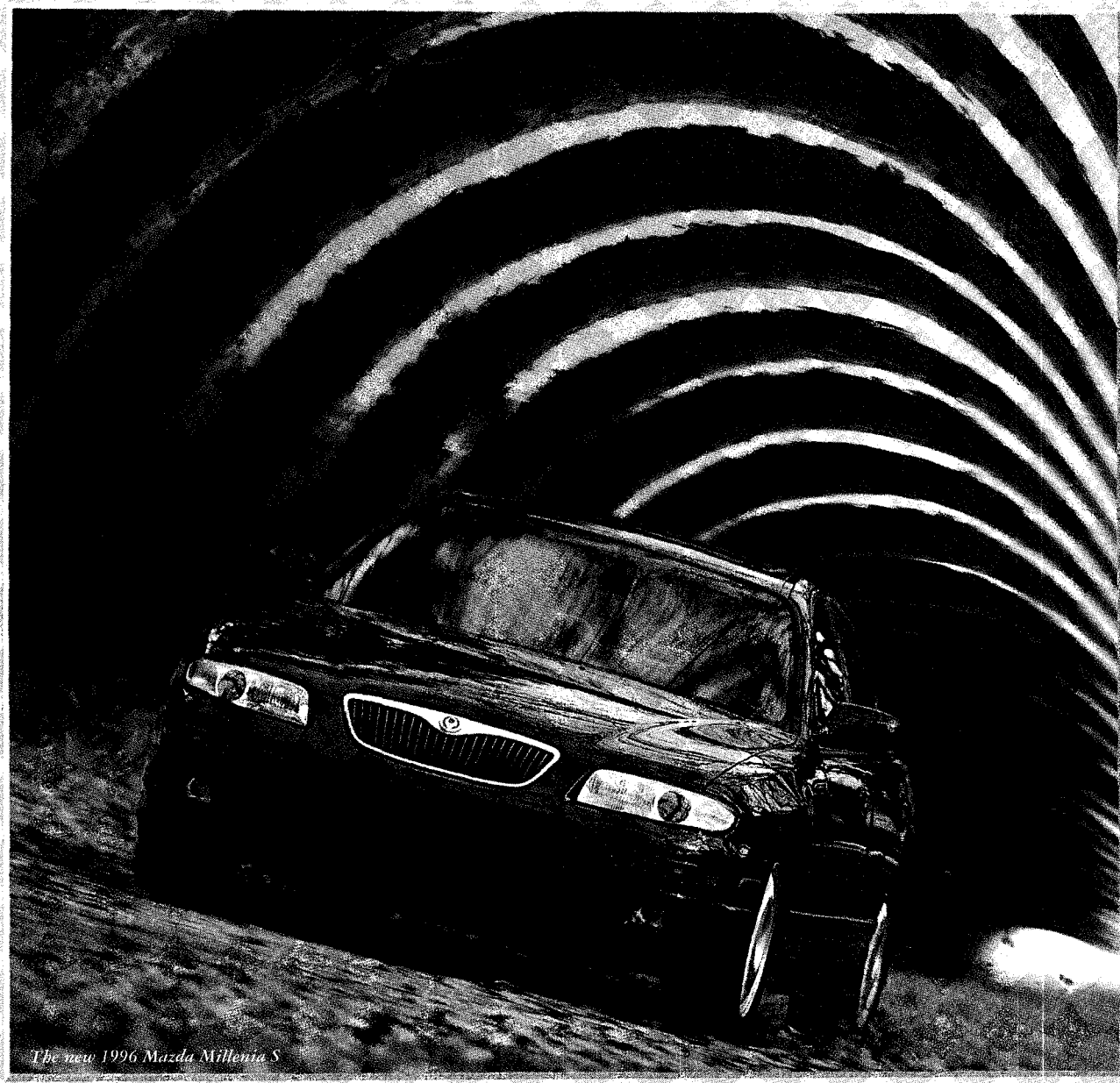

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

BLACK IS BACK

SEVEN years ago, Jesse Jackson announced that thenceforth blacks were to be called African-Americans—not an original idea (black intellectuals had been doing it for ages) but one that, because it was put forward by Jackson, prompted one of those linguistic conniptions so common in racial politics. "Just as we were called colored, but were not that, and then Negro, but were not that, to be called black is just as baseless," Jackson said. It's not surprising that, as time has passed, so has Jackson's absolutism. At last week's Million Man March, he delivered a homily filled with references to "black men," "black women," and "black voters." What was surprising, though, was the number of times he referred to "African-Americans": none.

As before, Jackson's conversion—or, rather, reversion—was just the tip of an idiomatic iceberg. Or at least it seemed so that day, when speaker after speaker took the podium and addressed the largest gathering ever of African-American men as if the battle to describe them as such had never been waged, let alone won. Instead, "black" was back. There were a few exceptions; Rosa Parks, for instance, called herself an African-American, and a proud one at that. Far more typical, however, were speakers like Benjamin Chavis, the march's director, who avoided the phrase altogether, and Louis Farrakhan, who employed it only twice in an oration of fifteen thousand words, and both times in mentioning the National African-American Leadership Summit.

Considering this, you might have expected the black intellectual world to begin bracing itself for another round of the racial name game, but in fact many prominent blacks hardly noticed the semantic shift, and when it was pointed out to them were not fazed by it. From the left, Roger Wilkins, a civil-rights veteran, said, "Normally, I have something to say about everything, but this leaves me speechless." From the right, Glenn Loury, an author and an academic at Boston University, argued that "the debate between 'black' and 'African-American' is over—people use both." And, from the center, Alvin Poussaint, a well-known Harvard psychiatrist, said the shift was due in part to the age of the organizers, who all came up during the era when "Negro" was replaced with "black," and in part to their desire to give the march an international flavor. "If you use 'African-American,' it sounds like you're excluding West Indian blacks," Poussaint explained. "At some colleges, they're drifting back to the term 'black' for exactly that reason."

All three men suspected that the shunning of "African-American" at the march did not occur spontaneously. All thought that Farrakhan was behind it. All had theories why: that he rejects the idea of being American; that he believes the "African" part too limiting; that he is respecting the history of the Black Muslims, who, along with Stokely Carmichael's Black Power movement, were among the main proponents of the gradual switch to "black" (a switch that was complete, arguably, the moment when, in October, 1968, James Brown's "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud" made the *Billboard* Top Ten).

Maulana Karenga, the chairman of the Department of Black Studies at California State University at Long Beach, and the author of the march's mission statement, believes that Poussaint's second notion is closest to the mark. "We agreed that both terms were appropriate but that it's important to point to a pan-African consciousness," he said, "and 'black' is the most inclusive, universal way to do that." After rattling on for a few minutes about the "world black community," Karenga paused, then said something that not only makes sense but also starts, perhaps, to make sense of why even people like Jackson might, at least for a day, have dropped "African-American": " 'Black' is just more accessible."

A LEGACY UP FOR GRABS

A HEARING in a courtroom in Florence this week should have New York University watching with keen attention. The case may affect the fate of La Pietra, the Tuscan estate left to N.Y.U. by Sir Harold Acton, last of the aesthetes, upon his death, in February of 1994. It's a wondrous spread, consisting of five villas, one dating from the fifteenth century, set among fifty-seven acres of olive groves, with a fair art collection to boot. In March, N.Y.U.'s president, L. Jay Oliva, was moved to exult that "this is probably the largest gift ever given to an

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American university, and certainly the most magnificent." Now, though, in a fashion that Acton's crony Evelyn Waugh would have appreciated, hands from the past are reaching out for their due.

Liana Beacci, Acton's seventy-eight-year-old illegitimate half sister, is in the final phase of legally establishing her paternity—a prelude to suing for fifty per cent of the Acton inheritance, which has been estimated to be worth between five

Harold Acton

hundred million and a billion dollars. Since Acton, in appropriately crafty fashion, left three wills—one in Italy, one in the United States, and one, unearthed just last week, in London—the case may come to New York early next year.

It all seems meant to be. Harold Acton's forebears were one of those British families steeped in European intrigues; they lived in Naples from the beginning of the mid-seventeenth century, married into the French and German nobility, and returned to England in 1864 with the collapse of the Bourbon kingdom. Back home, things got complicated. Lord Acton, the head of the family, had a son, Arthur, who did not inherit the title, because he was born out of wedlock. But Arthur was given a hefty sum of money by his father, made more as an art dealer, and became richer still when he married Hortense Mitchell, the daughter of a Chicago banking magnate. The couple settled at La Pietra in 1903, and their son Harold was born the following year.

Liana was born to Ersilia Beacci, Arthur's private secretary, in 1917. It is well documented that Arthur paid for her education and saw her often, and that when she married he restored the Church of Santa Trinita in Florence for the event and lavished presents on her. It is her contention that there was always an understanding that although Harold was to manage the estate after their father's death, she would be well provided for.

ARTHUR ACTON died suddenly in 1953, and no will was found. A Florentine who has been following the situation says, "Arthur was a collector all his life, and he was very precise. Every single painting and sculpture was listed. Lists and lists of things! It is unbelievable that the will was never found." Despite the mystery about the will, Liana and Harold got on well enough for many years, and she was a frequent guest at La Pietra, attending such posh affairs as dinners for Britain's Princess Margaret. But relations cooled as Harold Acton aged. There was a Gothic confrontation in the living room of La Pietra between Harold and the youngest of Liana's five children, sixteen-year-old Dialta. It was over a trivial matter—he suggested that she go home by bus, she wanted to take a taxi—but Dialta wrote a furious letter, and the chill was terminal. David Plante's Profile of Acton in this magazine noted that he was scared stiff that illegitimate siblings might claim rights to the property after his death, and quoted him as saying of Liana, whom he left unnamed in his wills, "I know nothing about that woman!"

Avvocato Andrea Cecchetti is handling the Florentine proceeding, and Liana's interests in the United States are being represented by Irving P. Seidman, the attorney who successfully secured for Anna Strasberg the post of executor of the Marilyn Monroe estate. Called on to participate in the hearing are N.Y.U., the British Institute of Florence (which was also left properties), and the executors of the estate. "It is enormously complicated, as you can imagine," says Cecchetti, who remains confident. "Liana will have the right to the succession of Arthur Acton and, consequently, Harold Acton." As Harold had apparently feared, blood may be thicker than water, but questions of proprietary rights to villas, art, and olive groves can thin it out rather effectively.

A BOOK OF LOVE?

THE other evening, the editors of the Modern Library gave James Salter a small dinner party at an Upper East Side restaurant to celebrate the addition of his novel "A Sport and a Pastime" to their distinguished list of classics. The book, first published by Doubleday in 1967, is about a love affair between a Yale dropout and a French shopgirl as they travel around France in an enormous touring car. Its purity of style and its sensuality quickly attracted a cult following that has continued to grow over the years.

At one point during the reminiscences, toasts, and congratulations, Salter, who is now seventy, described how his book—which he recalls in the introduction to the new edition as having been produced in a kind of fever or trance—had recently affected a young couple. At a book signing that afternoon, he said, a young woman told him that she and her boyfriend had read the book aloud to each other in the evenings. Apparently, it made such an impression that the boyfriend suggested a game: each would pick out a sensual passage that they thought best suited the other. Because they were both a bit shy, they decided to send rather than read the passages to each other.

Salter explained, "Her boyfriend worked at a small investment-banking company. She was afraid that if she sent what she'd selected over the main fax other people would see it. So, instead, she sent it to a friend who had a private fax, and who worked in the same building, and asked her to put it in an envelope marked 'Personal and Confidential' and send it to her boyfriend, upstairs. This was done; it was sent upstairs in its envelope. Well, it happened that the officers of the bank were gathered in the conference room receiving sealed bids on behalf of some construction company, or whatever, and the head of the banking house opened the envelope and read it out loud—this salacious passage with her name signed to it. You can imagine the consternation."

Someone at the table wondered what passage the woman had picked. Salter said that he, too, had been curious, but that she hemmed and hawed, and wouldn't tell him. Someone else asked if the couple were still together. Salter said he didn't think so. "I believe they split up. She said to me, 'It was terribly embarrassing, but, you know, I became very popular over there at the banking company.' "

"Perhaps she goes out with the C.E.O. who opened up the envelope," it was suggested.

"Well, now, there's a thought," Salter said.

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SELENA'S SIREN SONG

SIX days after O. J. Simpson was pronounced not guilty, another celebrity trial got under way, in Houston, and a new celebrity phenomenon—that of a national star whom only a narrow group of Americans can claim to know the least bit about—began to unfold. The defendant in this new trial is Yolanda Saldivar, a thirty-five-year-old former nurse accused of murdering Selena, the Tejano singer, who was shot to death last March in Corpus Christi, Texas. You've probably seen photographs. Saldivar, who was the president of Selena's fan club, has tiny eyes and a tight little frown and looks like a melancholy animal character in a children's book, a tagalong who's always getting left behind. Selena, if shown alive, is usually wearing a bustier or a midriff-exposing blouse and smiling a warm smile, with her hair pulled up into a tight ponytail, like a brunette Barbara Eden from "I Dream of Jeannie." Or there may be a chilling photograph from Selena's wake, which shows her lying in an open casket, eyes shut, a few bangs arranged on her forehead in a stiff curl. Fifty thousand mourners waited outside a convention center in downtown Corpus Christi to file past that casket. The national press, awakened to this fever of adulation and grief in a low-profile corner of the country, began to turn out copy with an awkward double goal: to pay tribute to Selena's career and at the same time to introduce her,

GRADING FARRAKHAN

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., asks five masters of black sacred oratory to give a strictly professional assessment of a colleague's delivery.

THE REVEREND WYATT T. WALKER
(*Canaan Baptist Church, Harlem*)

EVEN though I have my quarrels with Louis Farrakhan, I would say that on a scale of ten he was about a twelve, oratorically speaking. His strongest suit is that he can shift within a paragraph from humor to satire to rancor and even to substance, though infrequently. When he had the men raise their hands and say "I pledge," it was incredible. I thought it was the most impressive part of his whole two-and-a-half-hour talk. Of course, Vernon Johns used to say that the cardinal rule of the public platform is to remember that the mind can digest only what the seat can endure—and in this instance it was the feet.

•

THE REVEREND JAMES A. FORBES
(*Riverside Church, Harlem*)

I MEASURE preaching the way you measure diving: the degree of difficulty of the dive determines what score you get. Because this was an extraordinarily difficult thing to pull off, any minor slips here or there can simply be factored out. As a piece of communication, it was an extraordinary moment. In terms of style, especially in his public condemnation of the President and whites, and so forth, there was a balance of courtesy and critique that I liked. If he'd asked for my advice, I would obviously have told him to shorten it. And many, many people there were Christian, or, at least, not part of the Islamic tradition as he has fashioned it, so I would also have told him not to be so extensive in the esoteric knowledge, the secret numerology, the Gnostic disclosures.

•

THE REVEREND FREDERICK G. SAMPSON
(*Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Detroit*)

I THOUGHT he was most impressive and effective in his delivery, except at a few points. He overloaded the human mind, because he dealt with such a variety of thoughts and with a historical sweep that could be overwhelming for the average listener. He could have been more focussed, had more of a nutshell presentation. There wasn't one phrase that we will remember. As far as building to a climax? Let us say he passed a lot of good stopping places.

CORNEL WEST
(*Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge*)

FARRAKHAN has got much more of a sermonic, black-Baptist resonance than Malcolm, who had a street style of oratory. I think Farrakhan—who's such a disciplined brother and works so hard on his speeches—has actually studied black church rhetoric, black sermons, and just picked it up. This was not one of the great speeches that Minister Farrakhan has given—he had so much to say and so many audiences he was trying to address. My own judgment would have been to give a fifteen- or twenty-minute speech, the way King did. The crowd had been standing out there since early in the morning and was already so tired and depleted—and then he kept the people two and a half hours. Crazy. I was standing near him, and he had his speech written out on paper. I saw how thick that thing was, and I said to myself, "We got a while." Of course, Minister Louis Farrakhan is used to giving three- or four-hour speeches, so as far as he's concerned he gave the short version.

•

THE REVEREND CHARLES G. ADAMS
(*Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, Detroit*)

IN the nineteenth century, C. T. Walker, the great preacher from Georgia, created the repetition style. That is, as you come to your climax, you repeat, over and over again, your key phrase. "I have a dream, I have a dream," for example. Farrakhan could have said, "I have a plan, I have a plan." But it just didn't happen. Instead of getting lost in his subject, Farrakhan got lost in Farrakhan. He was a Beethoven searching for a theme for the Ninth Symphony, but he never found it. He was looking for a cadence he never discovered, needing a climax he never reached. As a dancer, he was flat; as a musician, there was no music; as a charmer, there was no charm in his presence; as a preacher, there was no ecstasy in his sermon, no shouting material whatever, no call for response. There was no spiritual orgasm after a long, long try. My granduncle, Gordon Blaine Hancock, told me how to handle a difficult church meeting. He said, "Give the opponent the floor. Let him talk as long as he will. He will kill himself." Louis Farrakhan talked too long. He damaged himself, his race, his nation, and the world. I'm not bashing him; I'm just saying his sermon was a dud.

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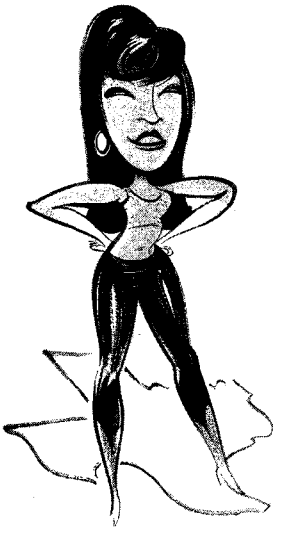
at this late date, to millions of Americans for whom she'd lived and died a stranger.

In trying to name the exact chord that Selena's death struck, the media have compared her with singers from Elvis to Kurt Cobain. Among several things that the comparisons fail to get across is what it means these days to be a star in the kind of music Selena sang. Tejano musicians are, first and foremost, highly adaptable and unpretentious borrowers. The music's most distinctive feature is the accordion, which Mexican-American musicians borrowed from German and Czech immigrants late in the last century; its basic rhythm is the polka. Tejano music grew up in the nineteen-twenties and thirties, when thousands of Mexican-Americans, hired in South Texas to pick cotton and onions and tomatoes, were subject to depressed wages, Jim Crow segregation, harassment by police and the border patrol, redlining, and half-baked schools. Considering the oppressive circumstances, you might compare Tejano with the blues, except that it began as instrumental accompaniment at public dances, which means that it has tended to stress what the audience wants to hear more than what a particular artist has to say.



Selena

Tejano music was falling out of fashion in the early nineteen-eighties when a strange pairing of godparents—activists promoting Mexican-American culture and corporate sponsors looking into untapped markets—stepped in and saved it. An awards show was created in 1981, and Budweiser and Ford were in from the beginning. Tejano acts started to get flashier—musicians experimented with synthesizers and added smoke and lights. In 1989, EMI Latin swept through San Antonio and signed six major acts, including Selena.

As the young ruling queen of this newly charted colony, Selena didn't seem to gravitate toward pain or reckless excess the way we have grown used to pop stars doing. She was hardly an icon of adolescent rebellion—she was a Jehovah's Witness, an optimist, a hard worker. And flexible: she'd always wanted to sing in English, her first language, but when her songs in Spanish took off she rode that horse as long as she could.

For the most part, Selena's music was a pale adaptation of pop music of the nineteen-fifties, before disillusionment, irony, and MTV anomie took over rock and roll. Still, to carry all this off, you need a rare, radiant person. For her fans—generally young girls, who even today get together to lip-synch songs, pulling their hair up in high ponytails and slicking their bangs into stiff curls—her death had the same unfair, illogical, catastrophic quality as a loved one's skidding off the highway. It seemed an act of God, with Saldivar serving merely (whether on purpose or by accident, the trial in Houston will decide) as the human agent. There's no cynicism, no Elvis-impersonator camp, in the fans' appreciation, but there may be a new kind of knowingness. Selena's fans probably now know how much it was to ask of someone to be, from a very early age, musically talented, photogenic, comfortable before a crowd, disciplined, commercially shrewd, competitive, and yet pleasant and inoffensive enough to cut a deal with a major label and secure contracts with Coca-Cola and Agree shampoo.

Young Mexican-Americans and Hispanics in general are coming of age at a time when the ideal leader is a corporate-approved "role model," and when people are taught to exercise their voice in society by choosing what and what not to buy. Selena's fans had looked forward to her breakthrough English-language album as a test of whether America was finally ready to buy one of *them*. They'll never know, because although the album has so far sold more than three million copies, it's not clear whether this number represents a winning over of the mainstream or the satisfaction of a fleeting curiosity. Selena's fans did get one piece of consumer news, however, and it's a bittersweet reward. Their role model died, and they discovered that now they, too, can get their murder trial covered daily in the press.

AN UNSENTIMENTAL CENTENNIAL

It's not every day that a New York legend turns a hundred. But there it is, right on the ten-ounce bottle of Manhattan Special: "Since 1895." This espresso-flavored soft drink can be found at Balducci's and Grace's (but not Zabar's—yet), though it's bottled in the same humble place where it's always been bottled: on Manhattan Avenue in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn. It's also not every day that a hundred-year-old firm decides to leave its anniversary virtually unheralded. Reached by phone in Greenpoint, Aurora Passaro—the head of promotion (and most other departments) at Manhattan Special—seems slightly annoyed at the mention of the milestone. "Yeah, yeah, yeah," she snaps, in a slightly nasal tone that recalls Bazooka bubble gum and Ebbets Field. "It's our big year, I guess."

Aurora runs the plant with her younger brother, Louis. She's the fourth generation of her family to brew the secret recipe of her great-grandma Teresa Cimino, an osteopath, who invented the elixir as a summer version of the coffee Italian immigrants consumed by the bucket. It was sold, like a lot of other carbonated beverages in those years, as a pick-me-up.

Through three-quarters of Manhattan Special's big year, the Passaros have no plans for a commemorative bottle or for promotions touting the drink that Enrico Caruso sipped between arias or for reminiscences of the Manhattan Special baseball teams, one of which was based at Sing Sing. The only concession to the anniversary is a series of ads in *Beverage Showcase* and other trade magazines.

Meanwhile, a century after horse-drawn wagons delivered the first shipments of the drink, bottles leave Greenpoint in cartons that read "Original Over 80 Years." But Aurora is planning ahead. Redesigned cartons are all set to replace the old ones as soon as they're used up. "We had about a million of them left over from last time," she says. ♦

"Black Is Back," John Heilemann; "A Legacy Up for Grabs," Anthony Haden-Guest; "A Book of Love?," George Plimpton; "Selena's Siren Song," Sarah Kerr; "An Unsentimental Centennial," Joel Millman.

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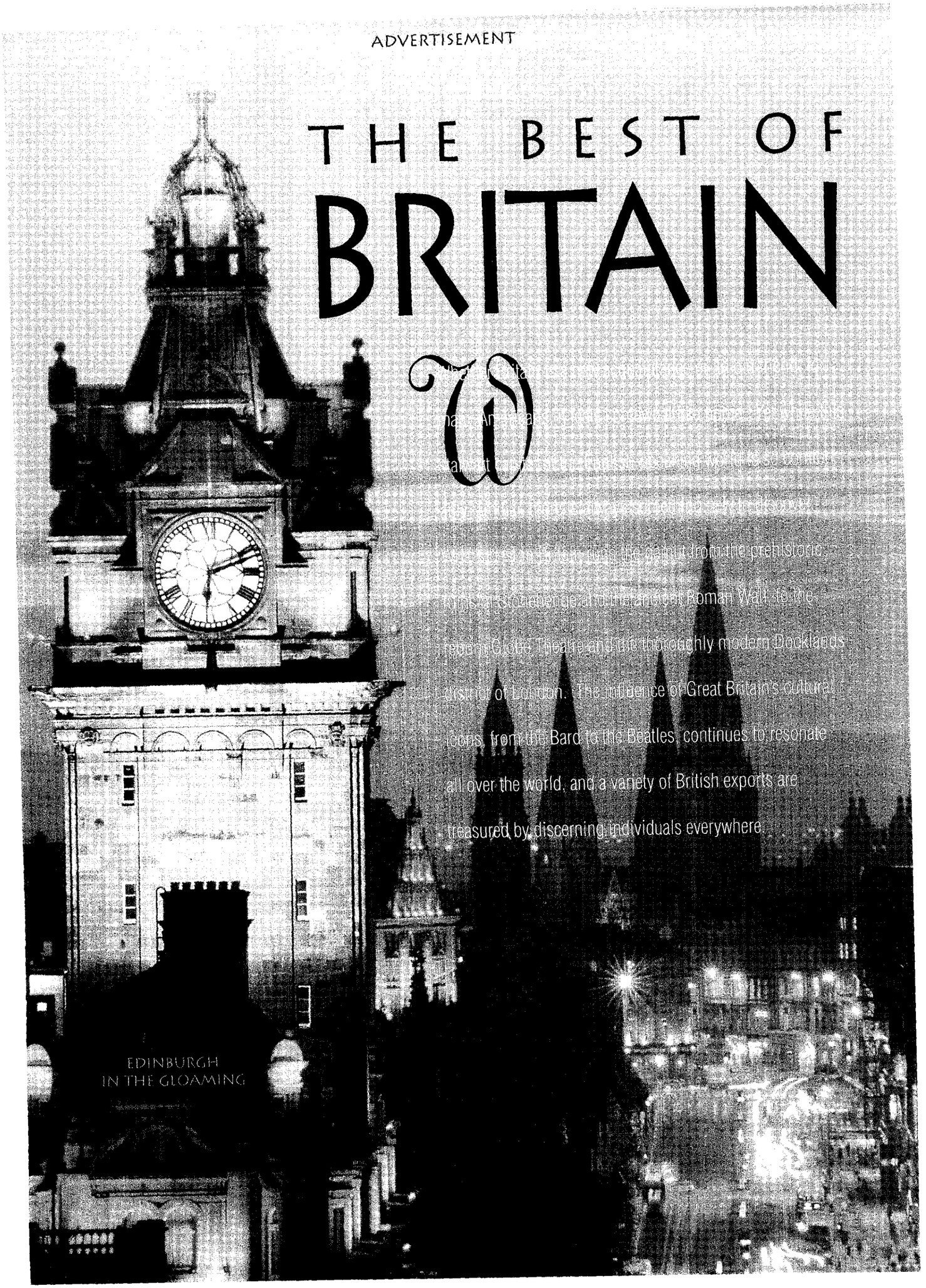
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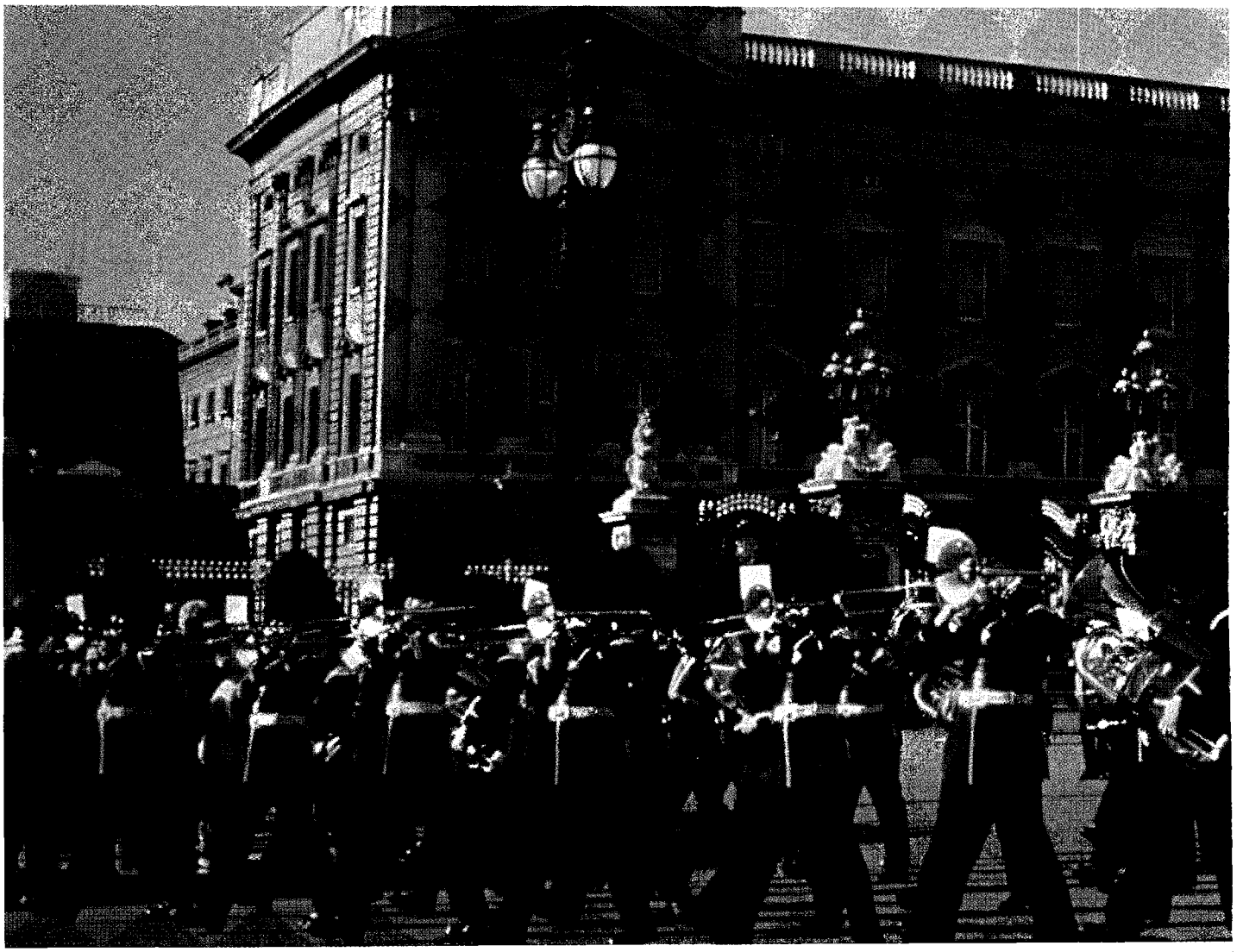

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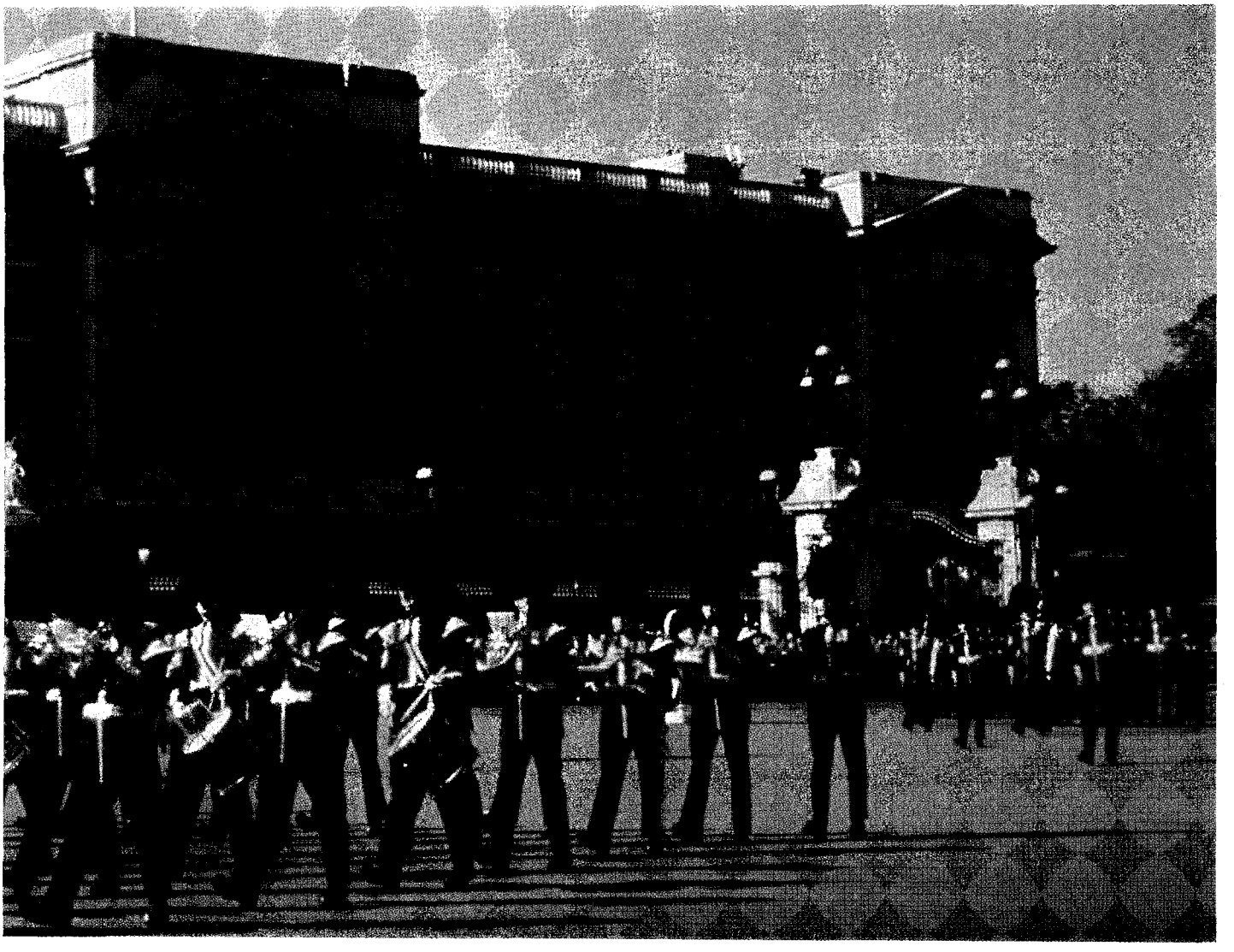

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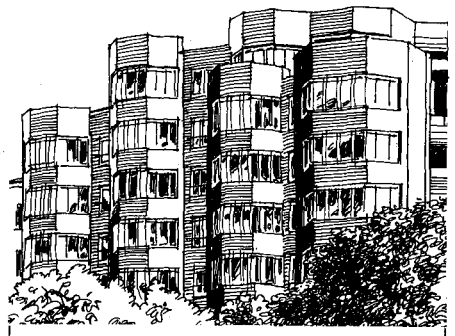

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John Major, Prime Minister

"The Best of Britain" supplement to *The New Yorker* has become something of an annual feature. I am delighted to be associated with it again this year.

As usual, the supplement has as its focus the natural beauty, history, tradition, and pageantry which draws so many Americans to Britain each year. In 1994 over three million Americans came here, and even more are expected in 1995. We are very pleased to welcome so many of you, especially in the year when we mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, during which our nations stood shoulder-to-shoulder in support of democracy.

But Britain is more than a nation of pretty thatched cottages, magnificent castles and spectacular panoramas. Britain is also a modern state at the forefront of technological development and business practice. That is why so many U. S. companies have chosen to set up their European headquarters here.

America is the world leader in aerospace. Britain is second. British contributions to the industry include the jet engine, vertical take off and landing—the AV8B used by the U.S. Marine Corps started life as the British Harrier—and supersonic flight. The U.S. is at the forefront of car production. But Britain leads the world in performance racing cars for both Formula 1 and Indy 500. Silicon Valley is the home of the world's leading computer industry. But we are no slouches: it was a British company that developed the software that enabled Steven Spielberg to weave fact and fantasy together in "Jurassic Park."

Britain maintains its strong traditions, but is also willing and able to hold its own in today's competitive world. Whether you come to enjoy our scenery and traditions or to do business here, you can be assured of a very warm welcome.

John Major

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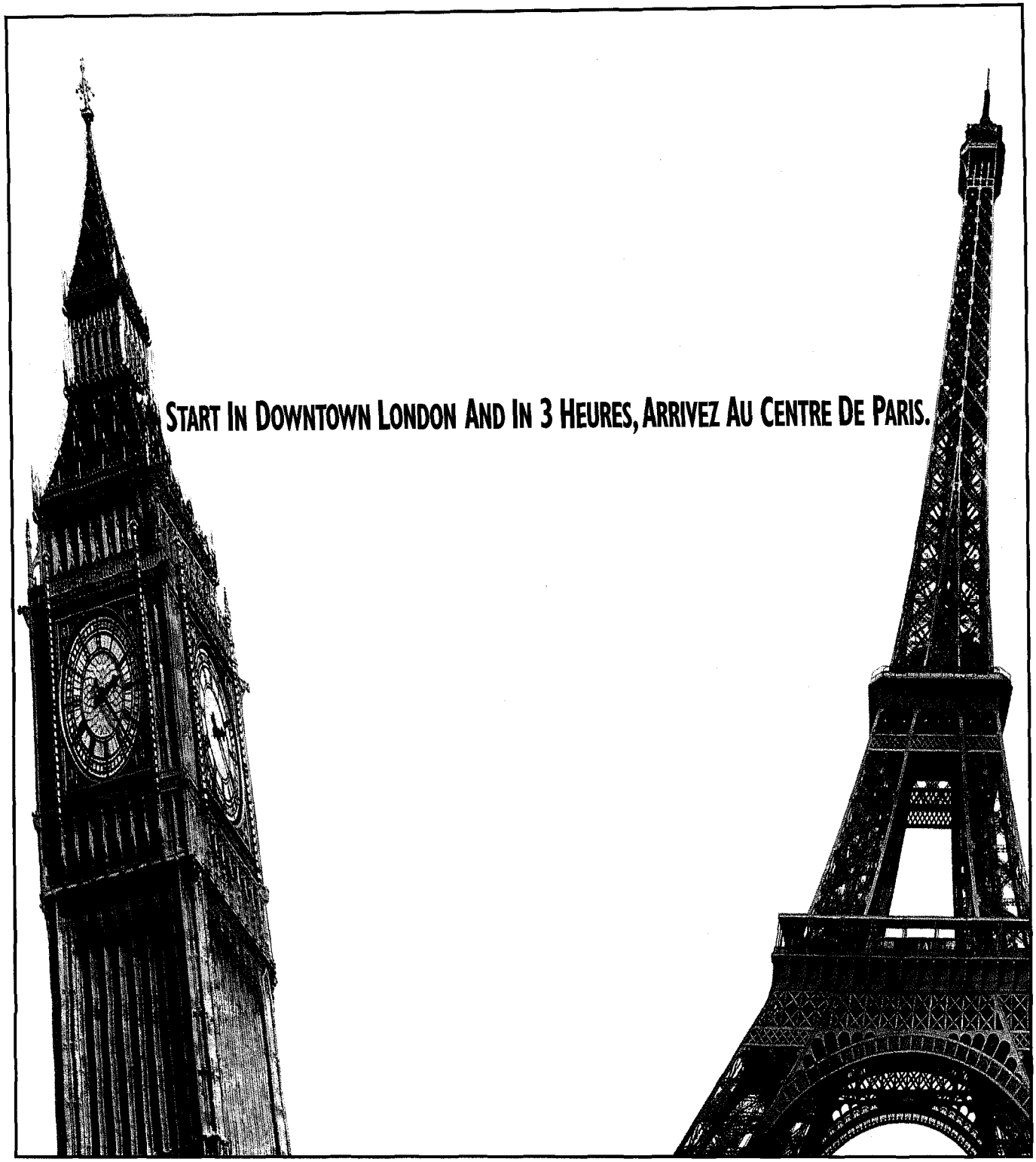

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A fascinating city that is at once ancient and avant-garde, London offers something for everyone, from the student and the shopper to the theatre lover and the history buff.

Every visitor to London can experience something old and something new. An ideal day in London might include a visit to Buckingham Palace for the traditional "Changing of the Guard" at 11:30 A.M., complemented by an afternoon visit to the National Gallery's newest and most controversial wing, a decidedly modern design by an American, Robert Venturi.

THE BEST SIGHTSEEING

The world's first and arguably most useful underground transit system, the London Underground offers the cheapest, quickest, and easiest way to get around central London. In a city whose variety of attractions can be overwhelming, a two-hour tour from the roof of a double-decker bus can lay the groundwork for informed exploration of some of London's best, not-to-be-missed sights, including the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's Cathedral, Tower Bridge, and the Tower of London. It's also well worth a short trip down the Thames to explore the Docklands, the most modern section of the city, featuring the futuristic, computer-driven Docklands Light Railway, which leads down to Greenwich and the National Maritime Museum of the Royal Observatory, home of Greenwich Mean Time.

THE BEST SHOPPING

In this "nation of shopkeepers," visitors enjoy first-class service in a wide variety of retail shops. And London is widely regarded as the shopping capital of the world. The exclusive shopping district of Knightsbridge boasts an array of designer shops, boutiques, and department stores along Brompton Road, Sloane Street, Walton Street, and Beauchamp Place. Once a busy fruit and flower market, the lovely, cobbled piazza of Covent Garden is still one of

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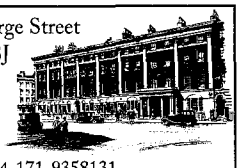

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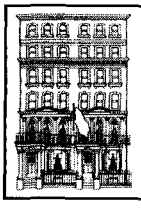

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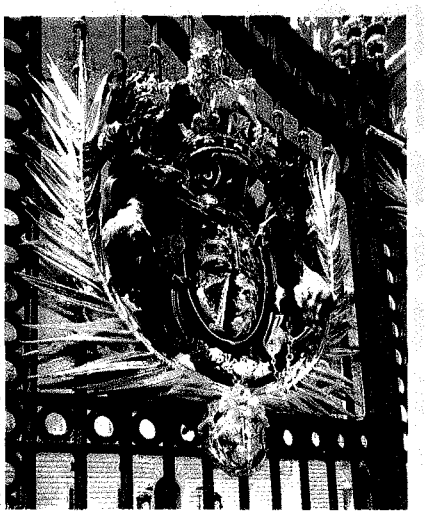
the world's liveliest places to shop. Other notable open-air markets can be found along Portobello Road and at Camden Passage in the bohemian district of Islington, a perpetually lively alternative-arts community, once home to Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, and Joe Orton, among many others.

THE BEST THEATRE

Theatre in London is legendary, and for good reason. London boasts far more theatres and a greater variety of productions than Broadway, and attracts a constellation of international stars that outshines any Hollywood gala. The current season's highlights include a controversial pro-



JOHN LAMBETON/STONE WORLDWIDE

duction of *Richard II*, starring Fiona Shaw in the title role, at the National Theatre, and the highly acclaimed West End production of Harold Pinter's *Old Times*, starring Julie Christie, at Wyndham's. Now, in the riverside district of Southwark, visitors can actually witness the historic rebuilding of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. This restoration is a meticulously researched and hand-crafted re-creation of the Tudor theatre where Shakespeare himself worked and played over three centuries ago. The Globe is a living celebration of Shakespeare's special genius, featuring an authentic open-air theatre where the Bard's plays are performed just as they were in his time.

Because London theatre is so popular, careful planning is advised. Theatre lovers and frequent travelers to London can catch a preview of London's best productions, get up-to-the-minute schedules, discount ticket information, and behind-the-scenes insight with the monthly *London Theatre News* newsletter, available by calling 1-800-779-0077. Visitors who have not booked in advance should visit theatre box offices or the Leicester Square Half-Price Ticket Booth to purchase any seats unsold on the day of the performance. Matinee tickets go on sale at 12 noon, evening tickets are available from 2:30 until 6:30 P.M. and cash is required.

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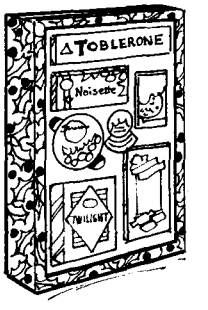

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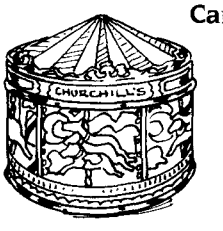

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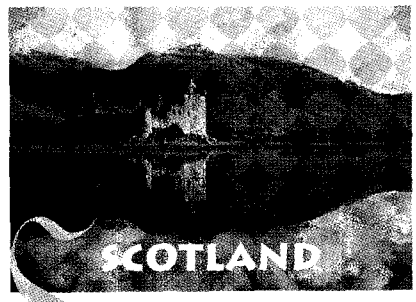
THE BEST SEASON FOR THE ARTS

Although this perpetually fascinating city delights visitors year-round, perhaps it is best to visit during the London Arts Season in February and March, a relatively quiet time that's off the peak tourist season. For your copy of the London Arts Season brochure, including advance information and booking details on major shows, gallery exhibitions, back-stage theatre tours, and money-saving museums' entrance cards, contact your local British Tourist Authority office.

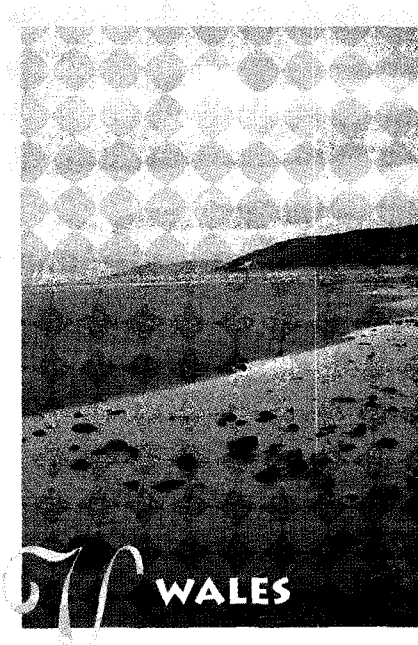
BOB KRIST/TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

A world of excitement in its own right, London is also a gateway to the historic cities and breathtaking countryside of England, Scotland, and Wales. Daytrips from London can easily be made to historic Bath, Canterbury, Oxford, Cambridge, and to the Channel coast, where visitors can discover the lyrical White Cliffs of Dover and the quintessentially Victorian Royal Pavilion in the seaside resort town of Brighton. Farther off southwest lie the counties of Devon and Cornwall, where the dramatic coastline is often punctuated by craggy cliffs and secluded coves. Central England, home of the Industrial Revolution and the bustling city of Birmingham, the geographical heart of England, is also home to the flat fenlands of East Anglia and the gently undulating Cotswold Hills. Outside of its major cities—lively Manchester and historic York—England's North Country is known for its countryside. This peaceful, pastoral region includes five National Parks: Northumberland, Lake District, Peak District, North York Moors, and Yorkshire Dales.



TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

Scotland is a place of outstanding character and charm in both its natural landscape and its culture. Perhaps best known for such exports as golf, kilts, tartans, and Scotch whiskey, Scotland itself is a beautifully dramatic study in contrasts. This magical country is home to some of Europe's least populated areas as well as one of its biggest arts festivals. From the lush Lowlands dotted with picturesque farms and Medieval castles to the silent, rugged Highlands shrouded in mist and legend, Scotland captivates and bewitches. Warm, welcoming Glasgow and ancient, elegant Edinburgh are among Europe's most beautiful and hospitable cities. Whatever their handicap, golfers from around the world pilgrimage to the legendary course at St. Andrews, located in the heart of Scotland where Highland and Lowland meet. Breathtaking landforms and unspoiled wilderness abound on Scotland's many Islands. The Western Isles, considered the heartland of the Gaelic language (though everyone speaks English as well), offer dazzling, pristine beaches backed by shell sand pastures rich with wildflowers, while the northernmost islands of Orkney and Shetland, with their unique, Scandinavian flavor lend an entirely different dimension to the Scottish experience.



JANE GIFFORD/TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

Known in Welsh, one of Europe's oldest languages, as "Cymru," Wales has been a part of Great Britain since the reign of Henry VIII. The long history of this unusually scenic country dates back to the ancient Celts, whose presence can still be felt in Welsh traditions. An ideal visit to Wales might include an exploration of breathtaking Snowdonia National Park on board an historic steam train and a trip to the beautiful coastal town of Swansea, home of Dylan Thomas, to discover some of the country's rich literary history.

For further information on the kingdom of Great Britain, contact the British Tourist Authority by calling (212) 986-2200.

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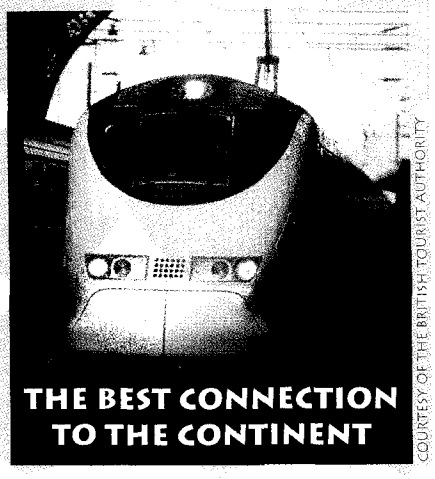

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GETTING THERE

The following airlines offer service to Britain. For information on specific flights, contact the airlines or your travel agent directly.

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American Airlines	(800) 433-7300
American Trans Air	(800) 221-0924
British Airways	(800) AIRWAYS
Continental Airlines	(800) 231-0856
Delta Air Lines	(800) 241-4141
Kuwait Airways	(800) 4 KUWAIT
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THE POLITICAL SCENE

THE PETE PRINCIPLE

What Pete Wilson's wipeout signals about California and the G.O.P.

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

On the day that Governor Pete Wilson of California dropped out of the Presidential race, the O. J. Simpson case went to the jury. At that moment, the nation's attention was not riveted on Wilson's withdrawal statement, which he delivered to a few hundred of his remaining supporters who had gathered at a restaurant in Sacramento. It was just as well; the more attention Wilson gained in his campaign, the more ground he lost. After a concentrated airing of television commercials in New Hampshire in late August and early September, he had finally won widespread recognition in the first primary state. Unfortunately, according to a poll conducted by the Concord *Monitor*, once his name and his positions became known fewer than one in twenty Granite State Republicans was inclined to vote for him. His popularity in California had also collapsed. A Los Angeles *Times* poll revealed that seventy-three per cent of Californians believed he was "not justified" in running for President. His ultimate rationale as a candidate had been that he could win California for the Republicans against President Clinton, but the poll showed that he trailed Clinton there by nineteen points—thirty-eight per cent to Clinton's fifty-seven. He was a man without a base. Wilson had reversed many of his previous political positions to push every hot button within his reach—immigration, affirmative action, welfare—and now found himself decried as a hollow man by critics on all sides. His choice was clear: he could continue spending millions he hadn't yet raised to boost his name identification, and risk repelling ever-greater numbers of voters, or he could get out.

Wilson: The first dystopian candidate.

JOHN CUNEO

Wilson told the Sacramento crowd, "To go on would simply be to run up an unacceptable debt." His oration, acknowledging the greatest disappointment in his career, culminated with lachrymose references to General MacArthur and Richard Nixon, but he never attained the defiance of a man who embodies a larger cause. The inspirational trope is alien to Wilson: he uses the mask of blandness as a shield for short-term tactical attacks.

Not even in the weeks following the Simpson verdict was Wilson able to reëstablish himself in California as a governor credibly getting back to business. On October 9th, the Los Angeles *Times* ran an interview with him headlined "WILSON DISSECTS FAILED RUN FOR WHITE HOUSE." In it, Wilson attempted to explain why he had entered the race. In February, he said, he had met with Senator Bob Dole in Washington after receiving the impression that Dole would offer to make him his running mate. "I probably would not have said to him, 'No,' " Wilson claimed. The statement was wrapped in a conditional negative because Dole had never mentioned the Vice-Presidency, nor had Wilson brought it up. Wilson seemed to lack even a glimmer of awareness of how he was undermining himself with his own version of events. Had Dole sized him

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up and dismissed him? Wilson's self-portrait after the fall was one of a man who could not locate his motives. Meanwhile, on the same day the *Times* ran the second of four special sections on "The Simpson Legacy." That day's edition was headlined "OBSESSION: DID THE MEDIA OVERFEED A STARVING PUBLIC?"

Wilson's fizzle may seem baffling. Within months of his triumphant reëlection last November, the governor of the largest state, who had been both a big-city mayor and a United States senator, assembled an impressive campaign apparatus. Political observers everywhere greeted his candidacy with enormous respect. Governor William Weld of Massachusetts, the most powerful Republican in New England, where the primary season begins, threw his support behind Wilson with gusto—and the White House privately feared him most. But in a little less than a year, Wilson seems to have effectively finished the political career he began more than thirty years ago as a volunteer advance man for Richard Nixon. With his withdrawal, Wilson's critics felt that their case against him was closed. "The man turned into a focus group," Bill Carrick, a prominent Democratic consultant, who had directed Dianne Feinstein's campaigns for governor and senator, told me.

Wilson's demise as a Presidential candidate leads to the question that perplexes Republicans as they enter this election cycle: Why is there no one remotely like Ronald Reagan, the avatar of the pleasure principle, in the field of candidates? The week Wilson dropped out, *Newsweek* ran a poignant cover story on Reagan's twilight existence. In an accompanying column, Reagan's speechwriter Peggy Noonan—always the romantic in search of a Republican to inflate into heroic dimensions—lamented, "Reagan looms like a sun, lighting the stage on which the year's contenders stand. But his light is so bright they squint in the glare and seem paler, washed out." She did not deign to mention the current governor of California: he had washed out so thoroughly as to be nameless.

California, of course, has been "the state that traditionally leads change in America," as Wilson put it in his withdrawal speech. But his vision of California is not that of the Golden West, El Dorado, the Endless Summer. If Ronald Reagan saw the world through rose-tinted glasses, Wilson looks at it through night-vision goggles. What he sees when he peers into the darkness are Mexicans swarming across the border, black students unfairly getting ahead in the University of California system, and the usual cast of shadowy suspects from the unworthy poor. Pete Wilson has the distinction of being California's first Presidential candidate to project the state as a dystopia—to exploit the encroaching sense of natural, cultural, and courtroom catastrophe in a political campaign. He conflated himself with the state as much as Reagan did. But if California still stands as an exemplar, and Wilson is its tribune, the state represents a future so toxic that it choked his campaign before it reached a single primary voter.

THE G.O.P. has won the Presidency only once since 1860 without carrying California—and that was with the election of James Garfield, in 1880. Wilson's exit leaves the Party without a significant figure there who can be slated on the ticket, which makes the state highly problematic for the G.O.P in 1996. If the Republicans do not win California's fifty-four electoral votes, they will be forced to adopt potentially combustive regional strategies. They must overinvest in a solid South, which within the Party these days means elevating the flag and cross of the Christian Coalition; and they must also carry the big industrial states of the Midwest and the Northeast, where the swing voters are ethnic Catholics. The 1992 Republican National Convention, in which the religious right was permitted access to the podium, and after which Catholics fled the Republican column, is a cautionary lesson.

Reagan's base in the Party was a triple base: he was the leader of the California Republicans, of the conservative movement, and of the West. If the California leader is not also the preëminent conservative, then the Westerners will revolt. And anyone less conservative than Reagan is intolerable to them. Yet, no matter how much Wilson tried to play to the right, he was never accepted as a Reagan substitute. His principal positions—against illegal immigration and affirmative action—are shared most fervently by California conservatives, and they did not travel well. Wilson's anti-immigration tack has been opposed not only by Re-

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publicans on the sidelines, like William Bennett, who called it "scapegoating, damn it," and Jack Kemp, who said that it tested "the soul of our Party," but by the new governor of Texas, George W. Bush, Jr. "Texas has the obligation to educate all children, regardless of who their parent is," he declared. Wilson's unthinking presumption that California's worries are the nation's was misguided. His views have only set him further apart.

PETE WILSON emerged on the political scene as the latest bright young incarnation of Republican moderate progressivism. Many of those who belong to this political tradition, dating from the late nineteenth century, originated in the Midwest, like Wilson, who is the son of a prosperous St. Louis family. The first Republican progressive to become a force on the national stage was Hiram Johnson, who served as both governor and senator of California, and was Theodore Roosevelt's running mate on the Progressive Party ticket in 1912. But California Republicans, who mixed a strange brew of good government, political independence, and nativism, were not yet in the Party's mainstream. It took the next Californian in that line, the Iowa-born Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, to bring the state into the fold. Hoover was widely acclaimed by liberals of the day, including Walter Lippmann, who, in 1928, saw him as the great hope for ending an era of reactionary Republicanism. In 1948, when Thomas Dewey, the Republican Presidential nominee, sought to defeat Harry Truman, he put Earl Warren, who was not only the governor of California but also a builder of vast public works and a social liberal, on the ticket. Four years later, Dwight Eisenhower named as his running mate a thirty-nine-year-old senator from California, a former G.I. who represented the aspirations, struggles, and resentments of the postwar suburban middle class—Richard Nixon.

Ronald Reagan was outside this mainline Republican tradition, but he had many features that gave him the appeal associated with it. He presented himself as a "citizen politician," a good-government reformer: he was an ideologue who was canny enough about California politics to give the appearance of being fundamentally non-ideological. Throughout Reagan's career, California served as the backdrop that verified his dreaminess. His economic theory might be crackpot, his facts fantastic, and his speeches a catalogue of therapeutic positive thinking, but California was always there as the indisputable concrete particular. His eccentricities just proved how Californian he was. Optimism, even utopianism, was the essence of his credibility. His "city upon a hill" was not the one that John Winthrop had envisioned but, rather, Beverly Hills. Here was no gloomy puritan, no malaise-ridden Southerner obsessed with the wages of sin. In lifting the G.O.P. out from under Nixon's shadow, Reagan, a transplanted Midwesterner with no darkness in his soul, appeared as the true Californian. Moreover, Reagan was personally tolerant, and that tolerance gave his version of conservatism a benign, open feel. He had lived too long in Hollywood to be judgmental about people's private lives. He did pander to the religious right, but the patent hypocrisy of the once-divorced non-churchgoer made him seem unthreatening. And as President, he treated California royally, supercharging its economy with military contracts. The former Democrat, who loved to entertain at Hollywood parties by imitating Franklin Roosevelt's speeches, was the biggest spender of them all.

Pete Wilson, after his election as governor in 1990, was seen as the most progressive Republican since Earl Warren. He was personally recruited and lured to San Diego for political grooming in the early sixties by Herbert Klein, Richard Nixon's once and future communications director, who was then an editor of the San Diego *Union*. "I talked him into coming," Klein told me. And he got young Wilson a job with a campaign group called Republican Associates. Upon being elected to the State Assembly in 1966, while Reagan was governor, Wilson joined a caucus of G.O.P. moderates who often opposed Reagan's measures. As the mayor of San Diego in the seventies, Wilson was consistently more liberal than Jerry Brown, the erratic Democratic governor. In 1976, Wilson backed Gerald Ford for President over Reagan, earning the enduring enmity of his party's right wing. And as a Senator in the eighties, Wilson aligned himself with the other moderates, not with the hard-core conservatives.

His first state-of-the-state address as Governor, in 1991, was a call for "preventive government"—and a break with the anti-government bashing that had been deployed since the Reagan years. Wilson was for new programs in prenatal care, mental health, preschool for low-income children, rehabilitation for pregnant drug addicts, and family planning. He observed Earth Day with new environmental proposals, and was unabashedly pro-choice and pro-gay rights. Unflinchingly, he raised taxes to meet expenditures rather than lead the state into a frenzy of self-lacerating budget cuts. "Isn't it great to have a Democrat as governor?" then State Senate Democratic leader David Roberti joked at a Wilson roast.

But "preventive government" soon disappeared from Wilson's speeches. He was frustrated by the recession and by his opposition—mostly Republicans in the state legislature. Tax cuts, which had begun with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, were having a deleterious long-term effect. California's schools, once ranked among the best in the nation, were now among the worst: according to the United States Department of Education, fourth-grade readers in California were tied with those in Louisiana for last place. The end of the Cold War was also traumatic. The Endless Summer, after all, was not built on surf. During the eighties, three quarters of the jobs in San Diego had been directly attributable to federal spending. In Los Angeles and Orange County, almost half of the jobs in manufacturing had been derived from military contracts. Now the bases were closing and the contracts were shrinking. Wilson's personality was ill-suited to an electorate going through such difficulties. He provided little emotional sustenance; he seemed to feel no one's pain.

So, with his poll numbers plummeting, Wilson did an about-face. Instead of continuing to stand on a platform of Republican progressivism, he clutched at an

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even older tradition in the state: nativism. He attached his 1994 reëlection campaign to Proposition 187, which would deny illegal immigrants public services. (Of course, in the Senate he had been an advocate of legislation that permitted a free flow of immigrants for farm labor, and he had supported hundreds of cases of illegal immigrants against the Immigration and Naturalization Service.) His television ads, with their infamous infrared shots of Mexicans racing across the border in the dead of night, galvanized the electorate. ("They keep coming," the voice-over ominously intoned.) At the beginning of the campaign, Wilson was twenty-four points behind; he finished fifteen points ahead. His campaign itself was a model of precision. In every voter category, Wilson's totals nearly matched those who were in favor of Proposition 187. By contrast, his opponent, Kathleen Brown, the daughter of Governor Pat Brown and the sister of Governor Jerry Brown, managed an unsettled campaign throughout, and the mood was running against her. Brown's quest for an issue that would somehow rekindle the optimism of her father's era made her seem at sea. Wilson's appeal to fear was relentlessly on point.

Soon after the election, Wilson drifted to Washington for his empty meeting with Dole. Then he drifted into his Presidential campaign. He acted on the idea that what had saved him in 1994 could win him the White House in 1996. His strategy amounted to a tactic: affirmative action, he decided, would do for him nationally what illegal immigrants had done for him locally. Shamelessly, he announced his candidacy in New York City with the Statue of Liberty behind him and even recited from Emma Lazarus's poem. He presumed that as the governor of California, he would be vaulted into contention. Last year, even Richard Nixon, Wilson's mentor, had told him that he could win. But Nixon's bookmaking was flawed.

WILSON'S campaign staff attributes his blundering to an inability to grasp the distinctions between the political process in California and the political process in the country as a whole. "Our failure to appreciate the difference was reflected in most aspects of the campaign," Dan Schnur, a Wilson spokes-

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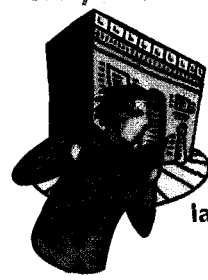

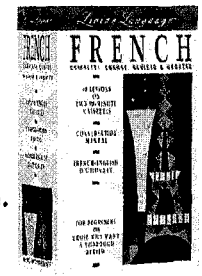

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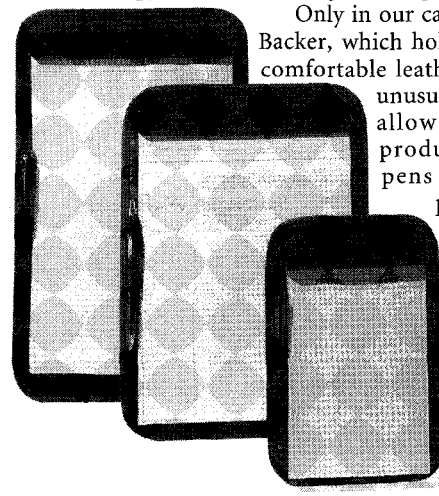

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"Ulrich, that's bad science and you know it!"

• •

man until immediately after Wilson's withdrawal, told me. "Much as I don't like to admit it, a California campaign is driven by paid media. There's not much press coverage. But there's more media coverage in a Presidential campaign. Wilson was convinced that he could run a statewide campaign." It had been decades since the candidate conducted a meet-and-greet tour of the sort demanded in New Hampshire; his notion of pressing the flesh was to air an ad.

Wilson was beset from the start. Throat surgery left him voiceless for months in the spring and early summer, and by the time he could speak again his campaign troubles had multiplied. And he grievously missed Otto Bos, his key assistant, who had died in 1991. Bos was a Dutchman to whom Pete Wilson represented Americanism. Once, when asked his religion, Bos replied, "Pete Wilson." His title was communications director, but he was much more. Bos had an expansive view of politics and a keen tactical sense. He was an ardent environmentalist and social liberal. He was Wilson's keeper of the flame, his strategist—even, some said, his "conscience." When Bos died, Wilson said that he "was like a younger brother." Schnur thinks that Bos's death "had a profound effect on Wilson's first term, and on Wilson." Indeed, it was not long afterward that Wilson, with Bos no longer there to guide him, began his right turn.

Wilson had expected to raise twenty million dollars, with the idea that a large treasury could provide a California-style media blitz, but he collected only five million. The scarce resources set two Wilson advisers—George Gorton, who had been an aide for twenty-five years, and Craig Fuller, a Washington lobbyist who had been hired for his connections—battling for control of the sinking ship. At first, Gorton gained the upper hand, and Wilson embarked on a hundred-and-forty-five-thousand-dollar television ad campaign to run in New Hampshire. (To be able to afford the media splurge, he dropped out of Iowa, the first caucus state.) Wilson defined himself in that ad by his opposition to illegal immigration and affirmative action. "While others talk about these issues, this determined ex-marine has had the courage to do something about them," the narrator said. Within sixty seconds, the word "courage" was repeated three times. Wilson gained infinitesimal support. Then a million-dollar debt was discovered. Gorton quit, announcing that he wanted to go body-surfing in Sri Lanka. Fuller took charge, but it was too late.

By running for President as he ran for reëlection as governor—on nativist and racial anxieties—Wilson obliterated his own potential position. He wound up campaigning against the grain of a moderate constituency that might have been his. He could not instantly fabricate a new base on the right, which was already supporting other candidates with more established claims; and his forsaking of the moderates had created an opening for the Colin Powell balloon, which, once afloat, filled the space and left Wilson no room for further movement.

Wilson's defeat was another indication of California's dramatically shifting symbolism. "This isn't the California that Pete Wilson created. It's one he inherited," Dan Schnur said. But Wilson campaigned to good advantage by exploiting his state's divisions, and he then tried his best to export them to the rest of the country. The convergence of O. J. Simpson and Pete Wilson was, ultimately, harmonic in its discordance. This California is not the cradle of wide-eyed optimism. It is not producing a Ronald Reagan. Pete Wilson may not be a special case but, rather, the first of a host of post-Reagan dystopians. ♦

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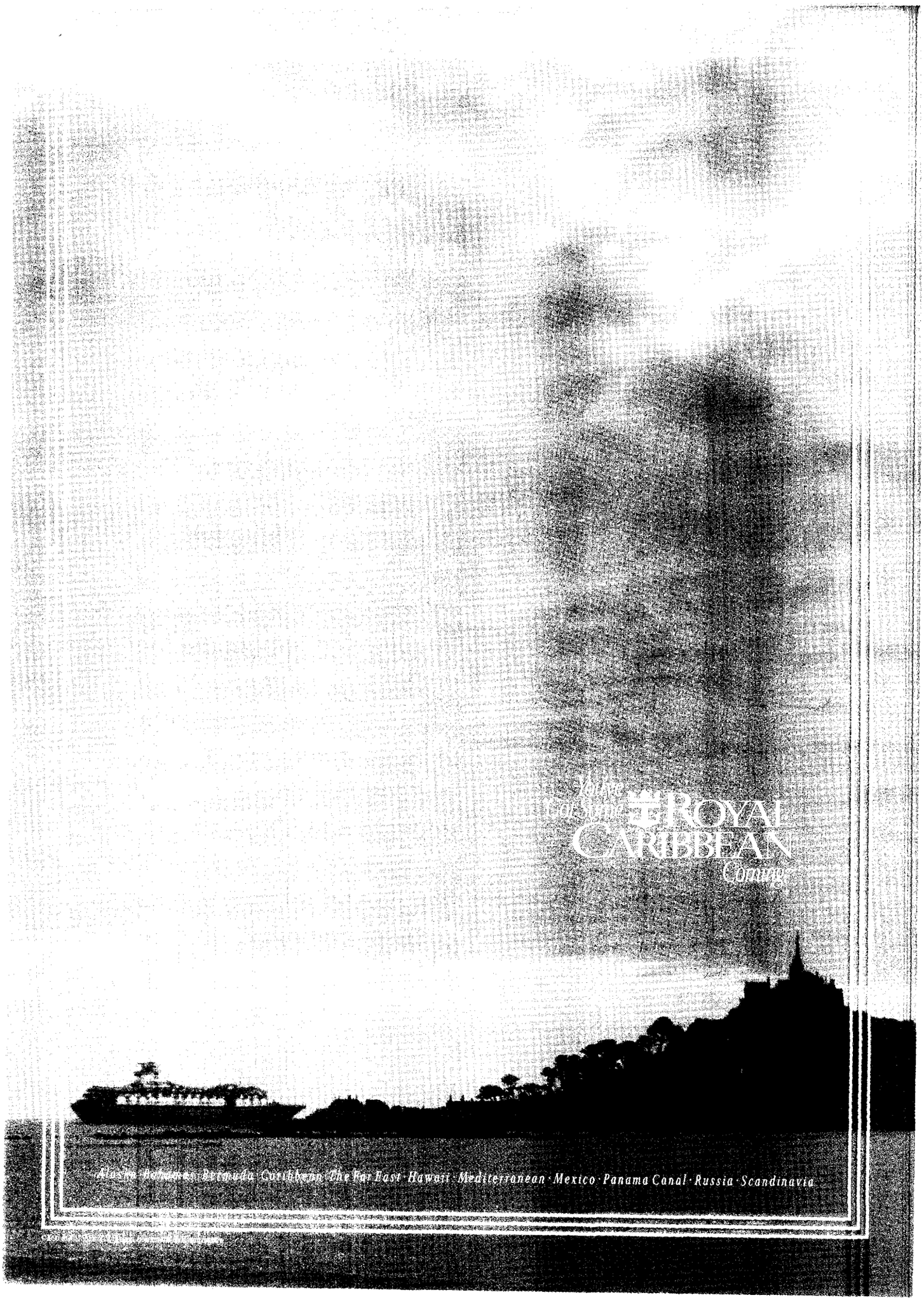

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LIFE AND LETTERS

KINGSLEY'S RANSOM

Why have the British been bashing the original Amis?

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

LATE this summer, a literary crime was committed in London: if the victim had been a woman, it might have been called "granny bashing." The elderly gentleman being ganged up on was Kingsley Amis, who, at seventy-three, had brought out his twenty-fourth novel, "The Biographer's Moustache," to little acclaim. The majority opinion was that this book revealed sad evidence of diminished capacity. The *Observer:* "'The Biographer's Moustache' is reflex writing, full of Pavlovian pedantry." The *Sunday Times:* "A stale, flat, savourless affair." The *Daily Mail:* "Banal, boring and extremely silly." Terribly dated, nearly everyone agreed. Amis, having been a poohbah on the public scene for decades, had become an overstuffed father figure, and father figures are made to be toppled. (After beating up on the father figure, the London press then smacked the son figure around, taking special glee in the failure of Martin Amis's much hyped "The Information" to be short-listed for the Booker Prize.)

If the reviews of Kingsley Amis's new novel reached a hostile decision (Pack it in, Pops), the interviews intended to promote it were even nastier. They literally added insult to injury. In August, Amis had one of the all-time bad months. His old friend the solicitor Stuart Thomas died; Amis spoke at the funeral service. At the time, he was a guest at the Swansea, Wales, home of his friends Michael and Virginia Rush, and in none too fine repair himself. When a *Guardian* interviewer, Joanna Coles, and her photographer arrived, Amis joked about a groin pull and grumbled about being dislodged from the sofa to have his picture taken in better light. You might think an interviewer would sympathize with the plight of a septuagenarian in obvious discomfort, but no, Amis was treated as if he were a prima donna holding up production. A more damning portrait was drawn by Glenys Roberts, for the *Daily Telegraph*, who likened Amis to "a cross between Winnie the Pooh and the misogynist American comedian W. C. Fields" and then complained that she was able to tweeze only a few quotes from him. That morning, Amis had taken a serious spill on the stairs, landing on his back, and as he waited on the sofa for the doctor, he sloughed off her questions. "It isn't often one goes from London to Swansea to meet a famous figurehead and encounters such a lack of civility for one's pains," Roberts fumed. No, it probably isn't. Given that Amis was physically racked, and dispirited about the death of his friend, he would probably have been better off cancelling the interviews instead of staring out into space in long, Pinteresque silences. The reviews of his interviews proved more scathing than the reviews of his book. The *Evening Standard* took a stern line with the geriatric juvenile delinquent: "Journalists should not let him get away with it. . . . If it is not possible to come up with anything remotely new or interesting, newspapers should not print this stuff."

Amis's oft-quoted line about bad reviews is that they ruin his breakfast but not his lunch. Yet such a battery of setbacks, public and private, may have been a serious blow even to an old curmudgeon with a thick crust. Amis had cracked a couple of vertebrae in his fall, and shortly afterward he suffered a stroke and ended up in the intensive-care unit of a London hospital. "I fear he may be on the way down," one longtime friend says.

I had no knowledge of this when I read the hostile notices of "The Biographer's Moustache." At the time, I merely found myself experiencing such cognitive dissonance that I ordered the book from England toot sweet. For many of the very sentences that reviewers had singled out as examples of slack execution, faltering powers, or rabid prejudice made me laugh. One critic was baffled by the line "A girl of about thirty answered his ring apparently clad in an excerpt from the Bayeux Tapestry." Another was offended by the sen-

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tence "Wishing he had been drunk, Gordon got on a bus apparently reserved for winners and runners-up in some pan-European repulsiveness contest." Another cited this supposed clunker: "Gordon got to his feet as Louise had done and grappled with her briefly in an amatory way, at the end of which she disengaged herself without hostility and telephoned for a minicab." This deadpan diagram struck me as inspired—a perfect Etch-A-Sketch drawing of the activities of a pair of stick figures. Admittedly, I'm favorably predisposed. As someone who has read virtually everything Amis has written, including such little-known curiosities as his study of Rudyard Kipling, I always look forward to the latest Amis novel not as a separate and detachable art work but as an opportunity to spend time in his mental company.

For better or worse—mostly better—Amis loosened the collar of English prose. He loosened its tongue. Not that he did it alone: Anthony Powell mastered the art of taking a sentence the long way round; Ivy Compton-Burnett hung thick nettings of domestic discourse; Henry Green dropped petals in the unimpeded flow of his characters' consciousness. But it was Amis who invested writing with the largest volume of chat. Beginning in 1954, with "Lucky Jim," he made a performance art of the right inflection, and not just in his fiction. The journalistic reviews collected in "What Became of Jane Austen?" and "The Amis Collection" have a slangy, matey tone that is a deliberate slap at both the grim spectre of F. R. Leavis, the forbidding Cambridge don who was said to have decried Amis as a "pornographer," and the belletristic legacy of Bloomsbury, wherein books were discussed in terms of breeding and palate. Amis opinionized in an off-duty mode, his manner frank and relaxed. He would discuss Keats not as a doomed Romantic immortal but as a chap who sometimes got a little flowery. According to Harry Ritchie, a contributor to a 1991 Amis Festschrift, Amis's reviewing has had a powerful influence on postwar English criticism. Now, he wrote, "the democratic wise-cracking of critics such as Clive James and John Carey, inspired by Amis's example, constitutes a new orthodoxy."

Amis's deceptively casual approach was more than a tactical ploy, a way of sneaking in punches; it expressed his conviction that language loses its responsive energy and observant value when it becomes overjewelled and forcibly sublime. He deplored Nabokov's aestheticizing of the mother's car death in "Lolita." After quoting the description of "a porridge of bone, brains, bronze hair, and blood," he remarked, "That's the boy, Humbert / Nabokov: alliterative to the last." He made sport of Evelyn Waugh's "Brideshead Revisited" in a review smartly titled "How I Lived in a Very Big House and Found God," deploring how Waugh's abject awe of religion and the aristocracy turned his once pristine prose into slosh. He even took Jane Austen to task for turning priggish in "Mansfield Park." He saw literature not as a mountain range of Towering Masterpieces but as a series of individual involvements that engage us at eye level and can be divided into those books we fancy and those we don't. Or, as he wrote, "Importance isn't important. Only good writing is."

In Kingsley Amis's portrait of the artist as aging matinée idol, he is mostly making fun of his own inflatable persona.

MARC BOXER ESTATE

And good writing can be found anywhere, in any genre. Amis was one of the first active practitioners (as opposed to pop-cult theorists) to see that the traditional literary novel has no monopoly on art. He monkeyed with the class system in literature, treating the categories of high-, low-, and middlebrow fiction as rough equals. Along with his serious comedies ("Take a Girl Like You," "Stanley and the Women," "The Old Devils"), he wrote an innovative mainstream treatise on science fiction ("New Maps of Hell") and an uncondescending study of James Bond ("The James Bond Dossier"), and later tried his hand at his own post-Ian Fleming Bond novel ("Colonel Sun"). He has also plowed the horror graveyard ("The Green Man"), played "what if?" with history ("Russian Hide-and-Seek," "The Alteration"), and dabbled in walking the detective beat ("The Crime of the Century"). Always an antimodernist, Amis rebelled against the role of the artist as deep-sea diver of the inner universe (Flaubert, Joyce, Woolf, Proust, Beckett: take your exemplary pick). He preferred to cast himself as a versatile pro running a modest amusement shop. His stance reflects not only a practical Everyman approach to writing but the distinctive English aversion to looking pretentious. But to Amis's detractors his pretension-avoidance was just a facet of his inherent philistinism and hostility to anything that smacked of cultural en-

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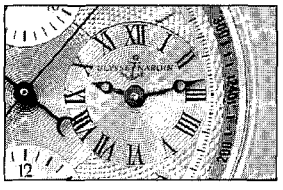

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hancement. (Translation: He thinks we're sissies!)

In his new book, Amis plays footsie with fact and fiction; "The Biographer's Moustache" was written parallel with the completion of the authorized biography of Amis by Eric Jacobs, which was published in England earlier this year. The biography, a dutiful, uninspired job, did turn up an interesting fact about Amis's childhood—that his mother, worried about his nourishment, spoon-fed Kingsley his meals until he was twelve or thirteen years old. "Then a new regime took over, though only slightly more adult," Jacobs writes. "After some minutes toying with the food on his plate, Kingsley would say, 'Mum, would you sort it out for me?' Mum then divided what was left into two parts, the food that definitely must be eaten and the rest that Kingsley could leave if he wished." This mollycoddling explains Amis's reliance on others for his routines, and his sense of himself as a little monarch. The critic Paul Fussell saw much of Amis in the sixties; he and his then wife, Betty, who is a food writer, knew what it was like to live under his rule. Betty Fussell recalls, "Kingsley's rituals. We all lived by them when we were with Kingsley—man, woman, and child—because we had to. They were the order of the day, as inviolable as military commands or church liturgies." Even on holiday, people had to abide by Amis time. She writes, "Breakfast with the papers was punctually at 9 A.M., even if Kingsley had fallen dead drunk into bed at 4 A.M. after a liquid intake that reduced the rest of us to Jell-O for the next 24 hours."

Kingsley's maintenance routine has continued despite changes of address. He shares a house in north London with his first wife, Hilly, and her third husband, Lord Kilmarnock—an odd living arrangement, which Amis himself has admitted smacks of an Iris Murdoch novel. Hilly brings him dinner every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, his daughter Sally pinch-hits. And what Amis's critics didn't seem to appreciate is that Jimmie Fane, the biographical subject in "The Biographer's Moustache," is also something of a stuffed goose. Like his creator, Fane has a lot of bluff in his makeup. Paul Fussell, who has written a thorny valentine to Amis called "The Anti-Egotist: Kingsley Amis, Man of Letters," told me that one of his chum's most admirable traits is that, "compared to Americans, he doesn't have an ounce of sincerity about him—everything he says is figurative." Likewise Fane. Everything he does is for foggy effect.

In this portrait of the artist as aging matinée idol, Amis is mostly making fun of his own inflatable persona—puncturing his own gasbag. Fane is a toady to the rich, a meal sponger, a wine snob, and a word bore ("These days I'm told the creatures have the impertinence to call themselves *gay*, thereby rendering unusable, thereby destroying a fine old English word with its roots deep in the language"). He diverts himself by playing pranks on his hapless biographer, the aforementioned Gordon—one of those earnest nonentities who make useful foils in English fiction. Gordon's abuse at the hands of Fane and his brief, wrenching affair with Fane's wife, Joanna, serve as his sentimental education. Never again will he partake of aristocratic nooky. At the end, Gordon recognizes Jimmie Fane for the shit he is—a "massive and multifarious shit." Nor does Fane's fiction pass inspection; the seemingly rich ambiguities of his early prose are laid bare by Gordon as "abject piss, well beyond any excuse of a comprehensive change of taste, simple passage of thirty years or more, etc." It's as if Amis were imagining the worst that could be said about his own output—imagining himself consigned to limbo.

A number of reviewers complained about the lack of engine in the novel's narrative. Fair enough; yet story has never been Amis's strength. (The plot of "Lucky Jim" didn't roar down the railroad tracks.) Amis's non-genre novels have always been ambulatory exercises in mulling things over. Where so much of current literary fiction either aims for damnation, combing the alleys in search of sex demons and serial killers, or strives for affirmation, seeking the rainbow over the bridges of Madison County, "The Biographer's Moustache" muddles through the middle latitudes of normalcy, which are laced with random nuttiness. Amis's characters don't scan the world through photo-realist lenses, putting a price-tag on every item of furniture and fashion; they take things in a general lump.

But beneath their surface inertia is what Fussell calls Amis's "highly rapid ironic intelligence." Amis's novels are always operating at two speeds simultaneously—a slower narrative speed and a

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faster judgmental clip. Behind their putty faces, Amis's characters formulate thoughts and store grievances; they mimic "all's well" even as their minds articulate like mad. The tension builds slowly and is discharged in a cloudburst of pique and frustration—like the exchange in "Girl, 20" when the narrator asks a friend's young mistress what makes her such a "howling bitch," and she replies in a snap:

> I expect it's the same thing as makes you a top-heavy red-haired four-eyes who's never had anything to come up to being tossed off by the Captain of Boats and impotent and likes bloody symphonies and fugues and the first variation comes before the statement of the theme and give me a decent glass of British beer and dash it all Carruthers I don't know what young people are coming to these days and a scrounger and an old woman and a failure and a hanger-on and a prig and terrified and a shower and a brisk rub-down every morning and you can't throw yourself away on a little trollop like that Roy you must think of your wife Roy old boy old boy and I'll come along but I don't say I approve and bloody dead. Please delete the items in the above that do not apply. If any.

(For a misogynist, Amis often gives the women the choicest comebacks—if not the last word, then the knockout next-to-last word.)

The machinery of "The Biographer's Moustache" is sleepy, and the invective is more contained (though there is a passing reference to "his bloody lordship and his piss-artist elephant's-bum-faced four-eyed boiler of a wife"), but the book transports the reader along to a brilliant set piece in the ancestral home of a dotty duke—a sort of P. G. Wodehouse Blandings Castle novel in compact form. Here Jimmie introduces Gordon to sylvan haunts similar to those of his youth:

> The view before them was certainly unusual in that, to the eye of a town-dweller at least, it contained nothing of the twentieth century, no power lines, no metal fences, no machinery, no advertisement. . . . Nevertheless the scene made no more than a puny appeal to Gordon personally. It was green, brown here and there but mostly green, motionless, silent, unpopulated and asking for the addition of a passage in curlicued italics about man's quest through the ages.

This country interlude saves "The Biographer's Moustache." It reminds you that a novel is not a blueprint for better living or a spiritual guidebook but an organism, with its own breathing patterns. For all the talk of Amis's patented misanthropy, the book is almost suspiciously free of malice.

"THE BIOGRAPHER'S MOUSTACHE" is agreeable minor Amis, somewhere below "Lucky Jim" and "Stanley and the Women," and above "I Want It Now" and "Difficulties with Girls." Given his age, drinking habits, and shaky health, it's a wonder Amis bothers banging out a book at all. It isn't as if he had anything additional to prove. If you pick up "Lucky Jim" today, you're impressed by how much it has retained its original fizz. Written over a period of seven years, during which Amis was peppered with encouragement and advice from the poet Philip Larkin (to whom the novel was dedicated), this academic comedy, published in 1954, about Jim Dixon, a young instructor at a podunk college, remains the classic test case: how does a bright mind cope with creeping boredom? Trying to pass as a capable young man, Dixon indulges in a full repertory of facial expressions (hearing his name called, he makes his "shot-in-the-back face") and anticant exercises. (When he reads a paper

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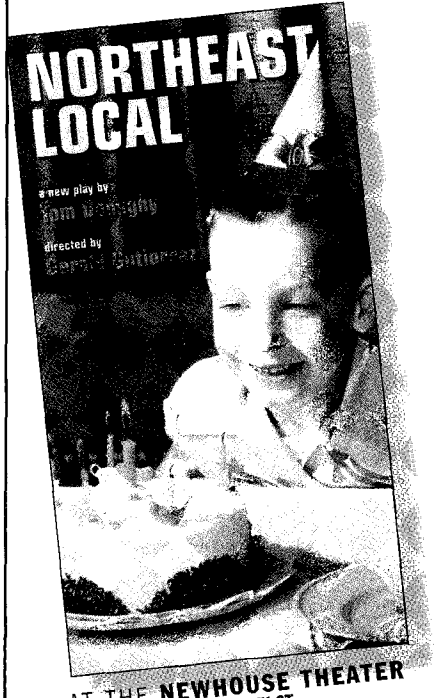

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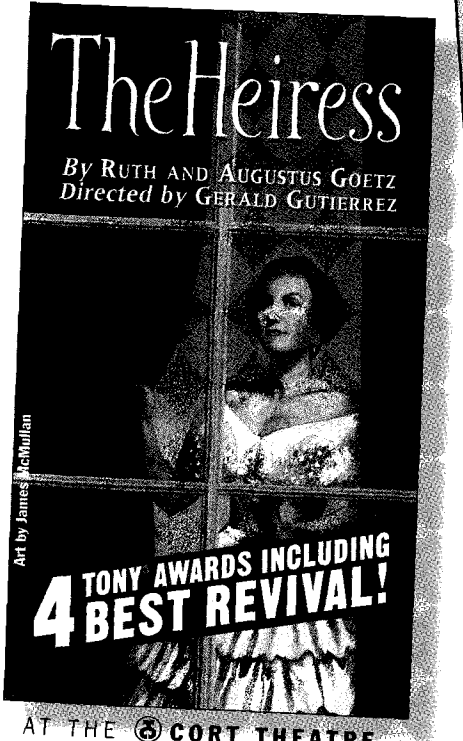

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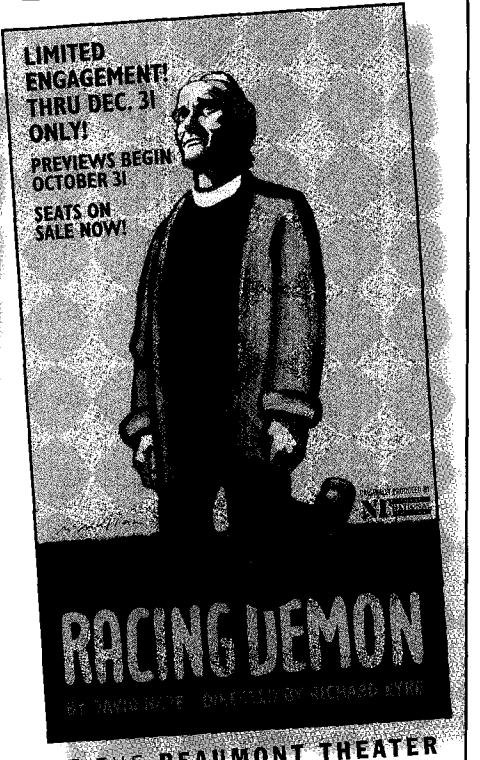

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that begins, "In considering this strangely neglected topic . . .," he asks himself, "This what neglected topic? This strangely what topic? This strangely neglected what?") "Lucky Jim" also contains Amis's prototypical hangover scene: "His mouth had been used as a latrine by some small creature of the night, and then as its mausoleum."

In an era in which Bret Easton Ellis and Susanna Moore run a chop shop of body parts, Jim Dixon's escapades seem as innocent as Archie comics. But the success of "Lucky Jim" provoked a furor that (unlike the furor over Ellis's "American Psycho") disclosed and defined a deep crack in the prevailing culture. Dixon may have been an incorrigible dear, but the social type he represented struck many as dastardly. Somerset Maugham, who admired the book, nevertheless washed his hands of its antihero, this "white-collar proletariat." Dixon and his ilk are ill-mannered layabouts, Maugham said, who frequent alehouses—"they are scum." Amis was lumped with the Angry Young Men, who included John Wain, John Braine ("Room at the Top"), and, most famously, John Osborne ("Look Back in Anger"). In a perceptive essay, "Class War in British Literature," Leslie A. Fiedler declared that the Angry Young Men's mission was to overturn the tea table where the genteel spirits of Auden and Eliot presided. They had no patience for exquisite taste, for "the Sitwells and Russian ballet"; that world bore no relation to the ugly, red-nosed mass-culture world around them. Snorts of laughter were their weapons in this war. Of the Angries, only Amis demonstrated creative staying power. (Osborne, for example, became a fulminating fop, like some deranged version of Captain Peacock on "Are You Being Served?") Amis had the stubbornness of the artist who learns how to ration his intake of experience and process it for later release. He paced himself to produce facsimiles of life in bite-size pieces.

After a spotty period in the early eighties, in 1986 Amis won the Booker Prize for "The Old Devils," that jangly group portrait of lust and swollen livers among the Geritol set, and then, in 1990, he was knighted. With one eye on the exit, he published his "Memoirs," which mixed anecdotes he had dined out on for years with a few revisionist put-downs. The Russian expert Robert Conquest, an old friend of Amis's and his collaborator on "The Egyptologists," told me that he'd noticed an anecdote about himself in the manuscript of Amis's memoir which wasn't true; after he pointed this out, Amis substituted Philip Toynbee's name—"which I don't think was accurate, either."

Amis has recently completed a new nonfiction book, and he was deep in the bag of yet another novel before his illness. Very few American writers continue to plug away past the point of glory, but Amis has been harnessed to his work habits. He would rise each morning for a small meal of yogurt and honey, put in three hours of work, break for lunch, then write for another hour in the afternoon. "That's four hours a day, every day, seven days a week," he informed the *Guardian*. Yet this steady application is more than a sturdy example of neo-Victorian work ethic, akin to the production schedule Trollope kept. Morale is a fragile mechanism. The diligence of Amis's daily routine expresses a strong psychological drive to keep the motor running, as if Amis believed that if he came to a halt a greater power would seize possession: his life would be impounded. "The moment you stop writing, you're turning your face to the wall," he told Joanna Coles, of the *Guardian*.

One of the most interesting revelations in the grudging interviews Amis gave was that he still dopes himself to sleep at night. "I pill myself up. Very relaxing, pills and Scotch. I sleep very well. It's partly drugged sleep, of course. But better drugged sleep than no sleep." On being asked if he could sleep without his dosage, he replied, "I don't know, I'm not going to take the risk. I don't like lying in bed tossing and turning. I used to be scared of the dark." (Readers of "The Old Devils" will recall the character Charlie, who suffered from this same fear.) By giving himself knockout drops at night, Amis is hastening sleep and blotting out intimations of mortality before they can muster an appearance. He chooses a small oblivion to ward off a bigger one. If his fiction sometimes reads like a groggy dream with the cobwebs still clinging, perhaps this is because it's the product of so much fermented anxiety. Like Hemingway near the end, Amis, in recent photographs, resembles a desolate hulk; his body has be-

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come a haunted house. "There is no personal God. There is no point to life," he told Glenys Roberts, of the *Telegraph*, with "utter finality," adding, "Though there is a point to art." And what is the point? To give other people pleasure, he said, with what Roberts deemed "uncharacteristic generosity."

In the current climate, beauty and pleasure are doomed to be obscured by character issues, which are in turn governed by attitudes toward race, class, sex, and politics. The posthumous reputation of Philip Larkin has been pitted by the publication of his letters and Andrew Motion's biography, which document his racist jingles, reactionary gibes, miserliness, damp palm for soft porn, and unwillingness to commit to the women in his life, all adding up to an image of a mama's boy in a dirty old man's raincoat—not the picture of a lyric poet you want to carry in your locket. Even Fussell, a staunch cultural conservative, says that he has become "disaffected with Larkin's character," which he now finds "hateful." Amis has always been more open about his cranks and antipathies than Secret Agent Larkin, so there'll be less shock at whatever indiscretions are later divulged, but not necessarily lighter reprimand. Inklings of the toxic leakage to come can be found in Jacobs's biography, a prize exhibit for future prosecution being a photograph of Amis on the beach which shows the words written in lipstick on his back by his wife Hilly, who was fed up with his philandering: "1 FAT ENGLISHMAN I FUCK ANYTHING." The caption notes, "They split up shortly afterwards." Amis went on to marry the novelist Elizabeth Jane Howard, with whom he had been having an affair. When that marriage dissolved, years later, the divorce was bitter and public. Robert Conquest recalls Howard's denouncing Amis in the press: "You'd pick up the paper one day and there'd be the headline 'How Kingsley Ruined My Life.' Then a few days later would be the headline 'How Kingsley Ruined Our Holidays.' " The Jacobs biography also reprints the draft of an unfinished, unpublished poem Amis sent to Conquest, a Kiplingesque ditty that ends:

The usual sort of men
  Who hold the world together
Manage to face their front
  In any sort of weather.
With rueful grins and curses
  They push the world along;
But women and queers and children
  Cry when things go wrong.

The paradox is that it's often easier to pardon true, frothing bigots, like Céline or Ezra Pound, because they seem so lashed by pathological furies; their sort of prejudice can be analyzed as the black ash of a charred heart. Next to them, Amis and Larkin merely sound cheeky. They're firing poison blow darts.

Yet compared with such hearties on this side of the Atlantic as Hemingway and Norman Mailer, Amis isn't so macho. The Amis man does not seek conquest of women and dominion over his shining field of endeavor; like his creator, the Amis man wants to settle into a comfortable rut. He is a longtime combatant in the sex wars, who no longer has the energy or the inclination to do more than kvetch about the minor irritations of his captive fate. (The last page of "Stanley and the Women" declared a domestic truce.) And a small rivulet of remorse trickles through the rut the Amis men travel from home to office to pub. It springs from Amis's personal history, from his persistent sorriness over the breakup of his marriage to Hilly. He snapped at the *Guardian* reporter who asked if he ever wondered whether things could have been otherwise: "Of course it could have been otherwise, but you don't think of that at the time, do you?"

No, you think of it later, and try to make amends. In the final line of "The Old Devils," Malcolm sits down to write a poem to an old love—"The poem, his poem, was going to be the best tribute he could pay to the only woman who had ever cried for him." Amis's biographer notes that the novel "You Can't Do Both," the predecessor of "The Biographer's Moustache," is an extended note of regret addressed to Hilly, and a subplot in "The Biographer's Moustache" involves restitution to a woman from the past. But it is more than guilt that sends Amis's heroes on these good-will missions. They're also expressing a fear attendant on death. The saddest fate in an Amis novel is to be alone, ailing, and unvisited. Amis men may resent being dependent on women, but they would miss having someone to talk to even more. Kingsley Amis has kept writing because he knows that death is when you reach the end of your words. ♦

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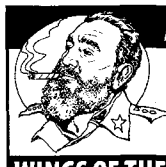

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AROUND THE WHITE HOUSE

LONELY GUY

Why President Clinton is partying alone.

BY JANE MAYER

NOT long ago, the *Times* columnist Anthony Lewis bumped into a prominent member of the Clinton Administration and congratulated him on what he had heard was his impending nomination for a distinguished federal judgeship.

"Forget it, it's not going to happen," said the official, Peter Edelman, who is—along with his wife, Marian Wright Edelman, the founder of the Children's Defense Fund—among President Clinton's oldest and most loyal supporters in the capital. Two decades ago, the Edelmans had launched Hillary Rodham Clinton's career as a nationally prominent public-service lawyer, and in 1992 they worked hard to get Clinton nominated and elected. They even helped settle Chelsea Clinton into the right school in Washington. So it seemed all but assured that Edelman—a respected civil-rights lawyer, who was a top aide to Robert Kennedy when Kennedy was a senator, and who is now a senior adviser at the Department of Health and Human Services—would be given a long-hoped-for seat on Washington's Federal District Court. But in late August President Clinton changed his mind about nominating Edelman. Further sharpening the disappointment for Edelman is the fact that he has yet to hear from the man who until last month he considered a close family friend.

As Bill Clinton enters what promises to be the most difficult reëlection campaign of his political career, the jilting of Peter Edelman is emblematic. Clinton, who made so many friends on his way to the White House that they merited their own famous abbreviation—F.O.B.s, for Friends of Bill—is now jettisoning them right and (mostly) left. Since the Republicans seized control of Congress last November, Clinton has increasingly put aside attachments to old supporters and to old positions, in order to minimize conflict with the new majority and to maximize his own political advantage.

A classic case in point was the President's renunciation last week of his own 1993 tax increase, a move for which—with no apparent justification—he seemed to blame the pressures put upon him by congressional Democrats. Clinton's attempt to distance himself from his own record, in a speech delivered to wealthy contributors, provoked such outrage among both Democrats and Republicans that the President was forced to retract his remarks twenty-four hours later. From the White House, where he has reshuffled or replaced many of his original aides—including most veterans of his 1992 campaign—to Capitol Hill, where the Democratic remnant has found that it is fending for itself, the President is going his own way. Whether Clinton is finally showing the courage to be independent, as he portrays it, or whether fear for his own survival has driven him to disown inconvenient allies, as his detractors claim, it is

Clinton: Getting rid of friends to influence the electorate.

BARRY BLITT

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becoming increasingly evident that a President famous for his exuberant extroversion has now, as one White House insider puts it, "embraced the notion of loneliness."

The President's solo voyage has been charted largely by the forty-seven-year-old political consultant Dick Morris. The two men have a history together: it was Morris who, blending cunning and salesmanship, helped Clinton come back from his only major electoral defeat—his loss of the Arkansas governorship, after one term, in the 1980 Reagan landslide. In the years that followed, however, Morris, who is famous for his slick repositionings, himself switched sides. Though his political roots are deeply embedded in New York's liberal, Jewish Upper West Side, he has spent the last seven years working almost exclusively for Republican clients, including such ultra-conservatives as Senator Trent Lott, of Mississippi, and Lieutenant Governor Mike Huckabee, of Arkansas. (Although Morris denies that he is still working for Huckabee, the Lieutenant Governor says the consultant helped him with a poll last month.) Despite that transformation—or, perhaps, partly because of it—Clinton turned to Morris again after the rout of the Democrats in last November's midterm elections, and Morris has quickly become one of the most powerful outside advisers ever to influence a White House.

Morris, who now lives in West Redding, Connecticut, is currently being paid two hundred and forty thousand dollars a year in salary and expenses by Clinton's reëlection campaign to spend five days a week in Washington, mostly counselling the President. He talks on the phone with George Stephanopoulos, the President's senior adviser, as often as ten times a day, meets regularly with Leon Panetta, the White House chief of staff, and is said to spend many evenings upstairs in the White House, in the Clintons' private residence, talking politics with the President into the early hours of the morning. His writ is to help Clinton design and carry out a strategy to resuscitate his Presidency, and to arm him for his reëlection campaign.

To the irritation of traditional Democrats, Morris's survival plan calls for the President to be almost as politically polymorphic as the consultant himself is. To describe the solo strategy, Morris uses a word borrowed equally from mathematics and from therapy: "triangulation." It requires the President to distinguish himself from, define himself against, and position himself above the two congressional parties. The idea is to put him at the apex of a triangle whose other two points are liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans. In essence, Morris wants Clinton to become the centrist, "third party" candidate for whom polls show a strong hypothetical hankering. "We support the Democrats in Congress over the Republicans, but we're not on the same team," the consultant has told White House officials. "We're not in disarray. In fact, on some issues we're arrayed against them."

As Morris sees it, the President's mid-course correction, which began in earnest last June, with his embrace of a balanced-budget plan, and intensified this fall, with his acquiescence in drastic cuts in welfare spending, currently amounts to nothing less than a Second Clinton Administration, the first having been a folly orchestrated by liberal Democrats on Capitol Hill, who drove the President too far to the left. (That bit of revisionist history, it must be noted, ignores the fact that Clinton invested virtually his entire store of political capital in his own ambitiously liberal initiative to reform health care—an initiative that collapsed in part because the supposedly too liberal congressional Democrats failed to deliver the votes to pass it.) With Congress now in Republican hands and likely to remain so for the rest of the century, Morris believes that the only way the President can undo the damage of the First Clinton Administration is to attract independent voters and to induce splits among the congressional Republicans by accommodating all but the most conservative among them. Morris goes so far as to predict that by January's State of the Union Message, the President will have so utterly coöpted the more popular parts of the G.O.P. agenda that he will be ready to unveil a Third Clinton Administration: a return to traditional Democratic issues of a kind that have strong middle-class appeal, such as education and the environment. "All the strands are coming together in a series of major achievements that are reshaping his image as President," Morris says.

Morris, who has never been known for his modesty, already declares the makeover a success. Fund-raising for the President's reëlection campaign is breaking records—more than twenty million

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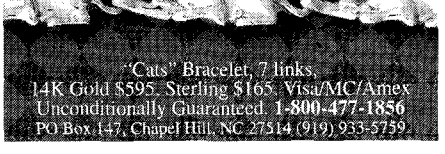

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dollars at last count—and Clinton now seems assured of being the first Democratic President since Woodrow Wilson to seek renomination without a serious challenger from within his party. Clinton's gathering strength is also reflected in recent opinion polls, which show him ten points ahead of the Republican frontrunner, Senator Bob Dole, assuming a two-man race. What is perhaps more meaningful, recent polls indicate that negative views of Clinton have been diminishing while the Republican congressional leadership's popularity has suffered a free fall.

Indeed, some White House officials suggest that Clinton is actually in a better position now than he was when his party ruled Capitol Hill. The November nightmare, the thinking goes, emancipated the President from the constant pressure to cajole votes in the House and Senate. Instead of fighting political trench wars, he has been able to deliver a series of lofty, if nebulous, speeches on big issues, such as last week's sermonlike appeal for racial harmony. Morris's contribution was to make the speech equally tough on blacks and whites, again positioning Clinton in the middle. "Triangulation allows the President to transcend partisan politics," one official says. "There's a real sense of liberation. He doesn't have to pass bills or get fifty-one votes. He has levitated above it."

The strategy is hardly without risks, however. To win reëlection in 1996, Clinton will need not only every supporter he had in 1992 but also millions of new ones. He must find a way to make up the difference between the forty-three per cent of the electorate he won last time and the fifty-one per cent it will take (barring the emergence of a strong independent candidate) next time. Most White House advisers are betting that Democrats, no matter how disaffected, will end up supporting the President, because they have nowhere else to go. But some worry about a "passion gap" that could undermine turnout. "There are real questions about how loyal even the loyalists are," the political consultant Stuart Rothenberg says.

Another risk of the plan is the threat it poses to the long-term prospects of the Democratic Party. Even the Republican pollster Frank Luntz acknowledges that Clinton, by distancing himself from many traditional Democrats, may succeed in saving himself, but Luntz also cheerfully predicts that Clinton's solo act "will destroy the Democratic caucus on the Hill, and end up electing more Republicans to Congress." He says, "Clinton can't govern now. Even if he wins in '96, this would make him completely irrelevant."

But perhaps the biggest risk of all posed by the strategy is that Clinton's ever-shifting positions and alliances will leave voters so thoroughly confused by Election Day that they won't know what he stands for. As the Presidential historian Michael Beschloss puts it, "voters may not know which of the three Clinton Administrations to expect in January of 1997."

SINCE becoming a party of one, Bill Clinton, an adviser says, "has been happier, more confident, less cranky—

"Your father thought everything was a big laugh, too."

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and he is even laughing more." But not everyone in the White House shares the boss's new upbeat mood. "Morale in the White House is lousy," another Administration official said, "because from day to day with Clinton no one ever knows where they stand." This official, whose experience stretches back to the Carter Administration, blames Clinton's mercurial nature for the fact that many of the political professionals who helped get him elected are no longer working for him. "The President gets hooked on people, but then he tires of the flavor," agrees a former White House staffer who nonetheless claims to find Clinton's "voracious appetite" attractive. "He'll tire of Morris, too. He finds something valuable in them, and then uses them up."

In contrast, Hillary Rodham Clinton's staff is passionately loyal and full of admiration and affection for the First Lady. She compliments staff members generously on their work and consults with them regularly about what sort of assignments really interest them. She is described as accessible, down-to-earth, and so corny that she has been known to send anniversary cards to her staffers' parents. "She's the opposite of her public image," a political operative who has worked for both Bill and Hillary said. "She is funny, warm, considerate, incredibly smart, and a great listener. But he—well, he is a drag to work for. He's always losing his temper." Such behavior, this still loyal supporter admitted, is "increasingly isolating."

Nowhere is Clinton's triangulation more deeply resented than in the Democratic Party's liberal wing. Many of the environmentalists, civil-rights and labor leaders, and abortion and gay-rights activists who worked hard for Clinton's election in 1992 have grown disaffected. The Los Angeles *Times*' Doyle McManus reported recently that neither the Sierra Club activist Bill Arthur, who in 1992 rallied eight hundred volunteers to leaflet Seattle, nor Sam Dawson, an organizer for the United Steelworkers of America, who rallied blue-collar voters all over Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, has much enthusiasm for the President now. Nor does the gay-rights activist David Mixner or the Harvard Law School professor and respected civil-rights activist Charles Ogletree, Jr., both of whom campaigned hard for Clinton's election last time. "There is very little I am going to

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do to insure that President Clinton is reëlected," Ogletree said recently at a public forum. Although Mixner, who raised millions of dollars for Clinton in 1992, says that he will probably work for the President again in 1996, he likens his support now to "a variation of the battered-wife syndrome—you have no place else to go."

Each group has its own grievances: labor is still furious over the President's championing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993; environmentalists decry his flip-flop on increasing grazing fees on federal lands and his signing of legislation that allows extensive logging in federally protected areas. Even Marian Wright Edelman broke ranks publicly with Clinton this month: in a news conference, she called the Republican welfare-reform bill, which the President appears likely to sign, "immoral, wrong, unjust, and un-American." Edelman has intimated that if Clinton does sign it her continued support for him will be in doubt.

"HOW is it that someone who so clearly likes to be liked has ended up not being liked by so many?" asks Senator Joseph Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat, who has known (and liked) Clinton since the President was at Yale Law School. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan is more withering in his assessment of the President's friendlessness. "There is just a complete break," he said, speaking of White House–Capitol Hill relations. "The White House would just as soon run against Congress." Moynihan sees Clinton's strategy of accommodation with the Republicans, particularly on welfare reform, as disastrous. "There was a pretty large political tradition which is vaporizing before our eyes—the tradition of the Democrats as the party of intelligent government provision," he said. "I don't know where the White House is going now. They're not governing. They're just doing the War Room."

Bill Clinton's growing confidence in the face of such hostility may be explained by history. As David Maraniss writes in his biography, "First in His Class," back in 1980, after his unexpected defeat for reëlection as governor of Arkansas, Clinton went into a period of deep seclusion as he struggled to find a way to salvage his political career. His guide out of the wilderness then, too, was Dick Morris. And his path then, too, was to disavow his earlier, liberal self—to run, in essence, against his own record. In the 1982 primary, Clinton positioned himself as tougher and more conservative than his Democratic opponents, and used welfare as the wedge issue, just as he is now. Also in 1982 he renounced his own tax increase, just as he did last week. In the general election, he reinvented himself as a populist, denouncing the Republican Party as the home of moneyed special interests, much as he has done in recent days this fall. In 1982, Dick Morris took to calling Clinton "Achilles without the heel."

The comeback was a smashing success—and Bill Clinton has not lost an election since. ♦

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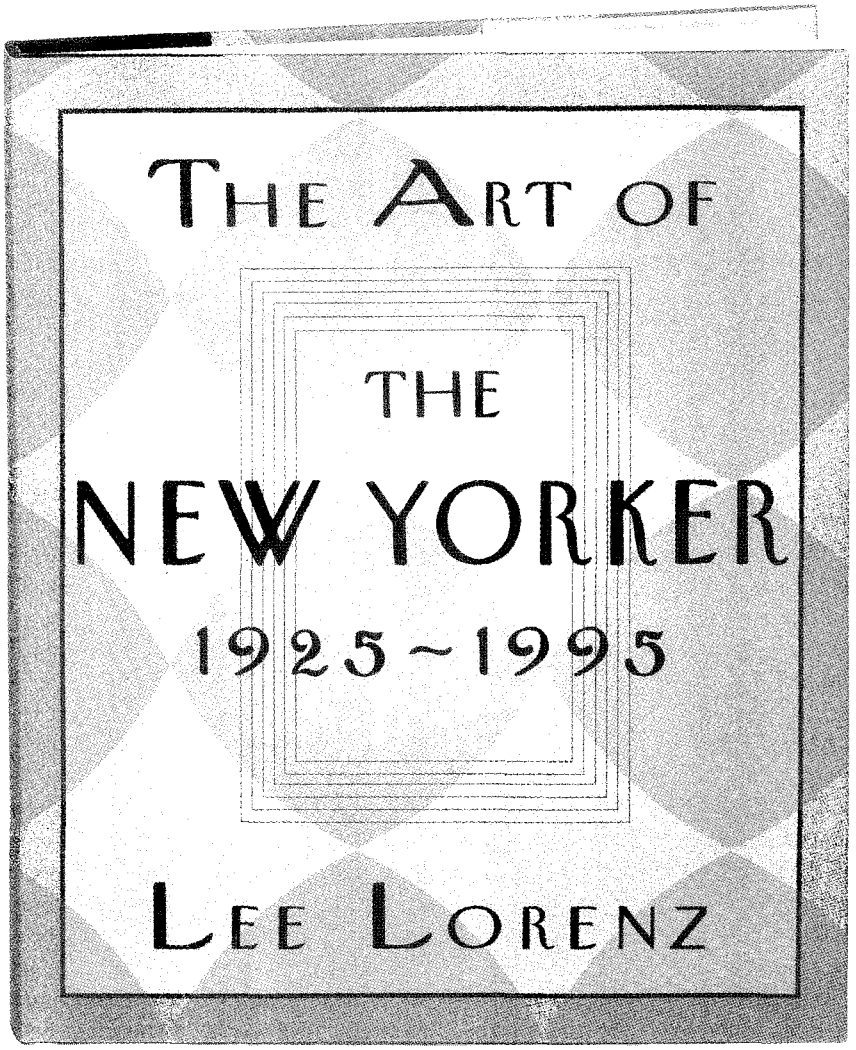

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE MONEY SHOT

American manhood has always defined itself in the workplace. But nowhere is men's job performance more literally about masculine prowess than in the San Fernando Valley's porn industry, where for increasing numbers of disenfranchised men the competition is all about "waiting for wood."

BY SUSAN FALUDI

If you turn south off the Ventura Freeway at the Van Nuys Boulevard exit and go to the 4500 block, you can meditate, like Ebenezer Scrooge, on the hollow murmurings and frenzied forebodings that are the ghosts of American commerce, past and future. This particular business strip is in the San Fernando Valley suburbs of Los Angeles, which means it could be anywhere. Look to the east side of the street and you can see the flattened state of things to come: a block-long mini-mall parking lot lined with placeless consumer franchises—a Blockbuster Music store, a Baskin-Robbins, a Humphrey Yogart outlet, a General Cinema two-plex playing "Bad Boys" and "The Cure" next to large signs announcing, coming soon, right next door, the opening of a General Cinema "Multi Theatre Complex" with "Five More Screens, Bigger and Better." Across the street, on the west side, is the past, and crumpled newspapers and discarded Baskin-Robbins cups skitter up and down its crud-caked sidewalks. At the boarded-up entrances to former hardware stores and shoe-repair shops, where tradesmen's tools once clattered, clouds of gnats hover, making loitering unpleasant. The small independent businesses have virtually abandoned the field; even the thrift store bears a "For Lease" sign.

One veteran from the old array of merchants remains open for business, tucked away on the second floor, up a well-worn set of stairs. Behind an unmarked door lies a room the size and shabby complexion of a one-man private-detective agency; dust-covered vertical blinds quiver in stale air circulated by a floor fan. A tired gray-blue carpet with a permanent crease down the middle is flanked by two chipped desks, each with an overflowing ashtray and a five-line phone, which blinks and rings ceaselessly from nine to six. The company sign, with a blue-globe logo, has presided over the street for fourteen of the firm's nineteen years, an exemplar of discreet advertisement from a more decorous time: "Figure Photography Films. Wanted: Figure Models for Immediate Placement. 986-4316. Suite 203." The ad is for the World Modeling Talent Agency, central casting for the nation's pornographic film, video, and magazine industries.

The agency has survived, in spite of the Old World gentility suggested by its sign, by accommodating the appetites of the ghost across the street. In a world where desire is packaged in videocassettes and marketed in malls, where self-worth is quantified by exposure, World Modeling has become the last-chance opportunity for a generation desperately seeking "immediate placement." It is both the backstage door to the current American dream and an emergency-escape hatch for a capsizing American economy. Which is why World Modeling these days lures not just women but men. More men, in fact, than women. More men than this industry of feminine glamour can even begin to absorb.

Every two or three months, the hopeful troop to "talent call" at World Modeling, a day when prospective "new talent" can market themselves to porn filmmakers and photographers, and old talent can refresh their connections. On this particular day in February, fifteen minutes after the agency's doors opened, at 1:30 P.M., the stairs, the hallways, the main room, and an adjacent balcony were already dense and sweaty with bodies.

Dead center in this sea of fishnet and spandex and Nautilus-assisted torsos, one job applicant stood motionless, his shirtsleeves rolled back to display ever-flexed biceps. A thirtyish, young-old man with a tanning-salon bronze and a smile gamely plastered on his face, he cracked his knuckles methodically as his searchlight eyes roved the crowd for a welcoming face—he found none—and scanned rows of glossy star photographs lining the walls. It would not seem the most encouraging of signs that not one was of a man.

"This is my first time," the aspirant, who identified himself as Damon Rose, told me. He had been trying to get the agency's attention for two years now, he said. Damon Rose might not appear to be the type to pursue a career in porn. He possessed, at the age of thirty-one, a sociology degree from the University of California at San Diego, an enrollment certificate from the M.B.A. program at Pepperdine University, and a recently expired real-estate license to practice in the State of California. But to label him "not the type" is to misread, badly, the workplace of the nineties. "All my education is for naught," Rose said. It had landed him a job as marketing director for a surfboard retailer, which yielded him an income insufficient to meet his student-loan payments. The selling of his own physique, on the other hand, had proved more remunerative; his résumé included, so far, basic training as a Chippendales dancer, running "my own male-exotic-dance service for women," and, most recently, a modelling assignment for a phone-sex ad. He posed naked

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY FINK

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underwater, cradling a telephone receiver.

"I was born to do this," he said repeatedly, rehearsing his enthusiasm on me for the audition he hoped to land in one of the agency's two tiny back rooms, where production-company executives had set up camp for the afternoon. After several failed attempts at "making contacts" in the main room, Damon Rose joined the long line outside one of the closed doors in the back. But when his turn came he was passed over again and again as the door flew open, a voice boomed, "New girl, please!," and another spangled woman elbowed by him. A despairing Rose turned to the closest actress, who was shellacked in hair spray and leaning against the wall. "You want to give me some pointers?" he appealed. She looked him over grudgingly, as if she were doing him a favor to lift her eyelids. "Just get it hard," she said. Then she turned on her heel and vanished. Rose returned to studying the shut door.

T.T. Boy, the star of the down-and-nasty-porn market, at his apartment looking out on an exit ramp of the Ventura Freeway.

The other men in the hallway kept their distance. Stag films may serve as the male-bonding glue of bachelor parties, but in the occupational end of modern porn the male performers view one another with Darwinian teeth bared, aware of their endangered status. "Actresses have the power," Alec Metro, one of the men in line, ruefully noted of the X-rated industry. A former firefighter who claimed to have lost a bid for a job to affirmative action, Metro was already divining that porn might not be the ideal career choice for escaping the forces of what he called "reverse discrimination." Female performers can often dictate which male actors they will and will not work with. "*They* refer *us*," Metro said. "*They* make more money than *us*." Porn—at least, porn produced for a heterosexual audience—is one of the few contemporary occupations where the pay gap operates in women's favor; the average actress makes fifty to a hundred per cent more money than her male counterpart. But then she is the object of desire; he is

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merely her appendage, the object of the object.

Outside the office, in the hallway by the stairs, Tyffany Million, one of a small but growing number of female porn stars who have stepped into the role of producer, scrutinized the new male talent. She was unimpressed. "I won't use a guy who's brand-new," she said. "Their performance is too unpredictable." Million was joined by Nick East, a proven performer of four years whose ponytail and lackadaisical slouch evoke a certain slacker sensibility. "This is a lot different than my talent call," he told her. "There were only two to three guys. Now there's guys everywhere."

East speculated that the increase is due to all the "publicity" from soft-core adult cable channels—from Spice to Playboy to Showtime, whose pornographic "Red Shoe Diaries" is one of its highest-rated programs. "So many guys see it and say, 'Hey, I could be a *star*.' " He rolled his eyes. "Guys are coming in with different ideas of what it means to be the guy in porn. The first batch came in"—in the seventies—"wanting to be real actors. The second batch," and here he pointed to himself as a representative, "came in to be lazy and have a great easy job. But the third batch came in to make a name for themselves." The first batch, actors like John Leslie and Paul Thomas, were legitimate theatrical actors—Paul Thomas was in Broadway productions of "Hair" and "Jesus Christ Superstar." That generation wound up in porn films partly to make a living and partly because they were products of a politically and sexually rebellious time. This was the heady "porn chic" era invoked by the surprise mainstream popularity of such classics as "Deep Throat" and "Behind the Green Door." The second generation, drawn by the mid-eighties boom in video porn, saw it as a low-rent version of that era's Wall Street ethic, just a quick and undercapitalized way to "make a lot of money," as Nick East said. But the third generation, of the nineties, is another story. This is their chance at televised notoriety, their bid for celebrity as famous phalluses, Natural Born Drillers. It's their way of crossing Van Nuys Boulevard.

"The first and second batch of guys made it because they didn't care," Nick East said, in an allusion to their lack of performance anxiety. "But the third batch . . ." He looked away, leaving the unspoken words "care too much" hanging in the air.

By now, the door to the back room had opened and slammed shut in Damon Rose's face five times. It won't happen again, he vowed. When the next new girl was ushered in, Rose slunk in right behind, riding her sequinned coattails.

Inside, the porn production scouts sat on a sagging foam couch and folding chairs. They barely glanced up as Rose made his pitch. Maybe it was his voice, straining to please, that dampened their interest. Or maybe it was just that the latest crop of men had largely proved to be nonstarters. Jack Stephen of Cinderella Productions said behind his hand to me, "We get these beautiful buffed guys, but they can't *do it*. They're just fluff. These new guys come apart like a bad suit."

Damon Rose spoke to them earnestly: "I've only done one thing—for phone sex—but otherwise I'm a virgin. But I'm—" The producer Mitch Spinelli interrupted, "Thank you, Damon," eyes craning over his shoulder for the next prospect. The audition was over. The porn producer and actor Steve Drake called out, "New girl, please!"

In the agency's main room, barely visible on a low side table tucked behind a stack of porn magazines and a shedding ficus plant, sat a snifter glass. It contained no brandy, just dollar bills. A handmade label on its front said "For Cal." It was a collection plate of sorts for one of the generation of actors who "cared too much." Cal Jammer had succeeded where Damon Rose could only aspire. And two weeks ago he had committed suicide at the age of thirty-four.

SOMEWHERE between last January's 12th Annual Adult Video News Awards ceremony, which coincided with the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, and an afternoon a month later with Bill Margold, self-appointed "daddy" to the porn actors, I began to get a glimmer of what the young men of modern porn are struggling to traverse: a treacherous terrain that has more to do with work than sex, more to do with gender identity than genital excitement. It is, in many respects, a far more problematic and painful passage than that of their female colleagues. It is also one more relevant to the larger working male population than a casual observer might suspect—just as the death of Cal Jammer had less to do with pornography than with the franchise economy on Van Nuys Boulevard and the great celebrity-making machine created on the other side of the hills, Hollywood.

The Consumer Electronics Show, the product presentation of the electronics industry, also (though its organizers are loath to admit it) hosts the annual exhibition of porn—a rare public assembly of what Adult Video News describes as a two-and-a-half-billion-dollar-a-year business whose product accounts for more than a quarter of all rentals and sales at the average general video store. On a rain-drenched Saturday, sodden but determined pilgrims jostled through the Sahara Hotel, past novelty booths advertising Pin the Macho on the Man games and Growing Pecker blow-up dildos, and lined up before autograph booths featuring porn starlets. While the lines for Kirsty Waay and Lexus Locklear and even for some unknown women snaked around the corner, almost all the male actors had to work the crowd to drum up signature requests. Only one man had a line. John Wayne Bobbitt was here to promote his recently released sex video.

That evening, the talent reconvened in a ballroom at Bally's hotel for the awards ceremony. The hall's male population seemed divided along the same lines that distinguished the men at World Modeling during talent calls. The older men, in rumpled jackets, treated the awards as the largely ludicrous honors that they were—"Best Anal-Themed Feature," "Best Specialty Tape: Spanking"—and headed for the bar. The younger ones, with gelled hair and waxed chests, sipped mineral water and discussed "my five-year game plan," "career moves," and the possibility of merchandising items with their names on them, like boxer shorts. Sean Michaels, a porn actor and director who was one of the first to market such designer briefs, ascended the stage in a tux to be inducted into the A.V.N. Hall of Fame, and asked his mother to stand and be recognized for "giving me strength." Then, nodding regally to what he called "my constituency," he moved as slowly as a homecoming float through the crowd of onlookers, trailing cologne.

The young men's how-I-got-here stories are of a piece. They have all bailed out of sinking occupational worlds that used to confer upon working men a measure of dignity and a masculine mantle but now offer only uncertainty. Steven St. Croix went to vocational school to be a mason,

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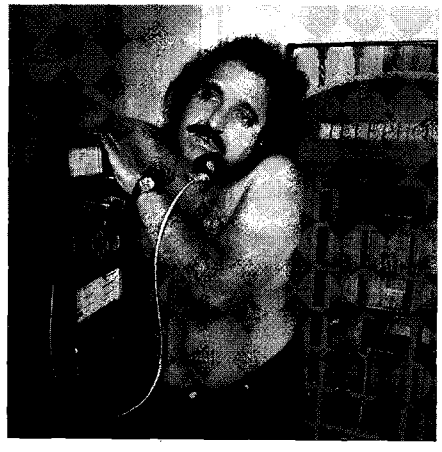
but all the job openings he found involved busing tables, washing dishes. Stripping, then porn acting, gave him a livelihood, and "recognition." Julian St. Jox was an Army Airborne Ranger, but once he entered civilian life he found that his job as a bartender barely covered the rent. "Porn pays the bills," he said. A twenty-four-year-old actor who calls himself Mr. Marcus concluded that this industry was a good job prospect when his stepfather, following twenty-five years of loyal service lifting boxes at a warehouse, was laid off without notice or severance or retirement pay. Vince Vouyer, twenty-nine, worked for four years as a forklift mechanic, one of the men who "built things," before realizing that such men belong to a rapidly receding past.

"WHO knows who builds things? Who cares?" Bill Margold said to me as we sat in his cat-hair-strewn apartment in Los Angeles a month after the Adult Video News Awards. Margold, who is fifty-two, entered the porn industry in 1969 and proceeded from scriptwriter to performer to unofficial papa of distressed porn stars. He invites despondent actors here to hug one of the scores of teddy bears he collects for this purpose. As we spoke, a yowling tomcat called Pogo competed for his owner's attentions, leaping from chair to chair, his switching tail knocking porn glossies and adult magazines to the floor. It used to be, Margold said, that you proved your manhood by building things. "That was the artisan mentality. That doesn't exist anymore. We live in a microwave-oven mentality. Before you even think about it, it's already there on the table."

Of course, he said, the porn industry has its artisans. Cal Jammer had been one—a set designer, electrician, and general handyman in the business as well as a performer.

Margold met Cal Jammer on the set of "Aussie Exchange Girls," and he recalled Cal's eager, almost desperate need to please. "Basically he was a sheepdog that didn't know when to stop licking your hand," Margold said. "It's like this cat essentially, only this cat is not as good-natured." At that, the cat made a lunge at Margold's chest, and the exasperated porn daddy hurled Pogo into the next room. Margold fell silent, and the evening shadows stole across a row of teddy bears lined up like sentries on a high bookcase.



"Absorbed into the mainstream," from top: John Wayne Bobbitt, Nick East, Austin and Dallas McCloud, and Ron Jeremy.

"I lament that I wasn't able to help Cal," he said after a while. The night after Cal's death, at 2 and 3 A.M., Margold got two calls from anguished performers, wanting to know why Cal "did it" and if they should do it, too. Margold had set up a hot line last year after the suicide of the female porn star Savannah. Porn actresses' committing suicide is a concept the industry veterans understand; they've seen it before. But for a male actor to despair, to exit the stage so violently—what did it mean? When did they begin to care so much? And why, in the winter and spring of 1995, did the men of porn care so much about Cal Jammer, a man most of them knew only casually but whose name now provoked teary diatribes, fists slammed into walls?

Perhaps it had less to do with his individual passions and personality than with his generic story, for he had come out of the same world the others had, to arrive at the same destination. Cal Jammer—or Randy Potes, as he was called until he entered the business, eight years ago—was the son of a Navy veteran turned physics professor and a mother who worked at the General Motors plant in Van Nuys, near Los Angeles. He was one of five boys, and when he was still young his parents divorced; their father retreated from the sons' lives. More recently, the G.M. plant closed and their mother returned to community college for "retraining." Cal's strength and dexterity lent themselves to skilled labor and athletics. He worked on construction crews and installed solar panels and, when he wasn't working, surfed and Jet Skied. He got work modelling and building sets for a porn photo studio in the late eighties and soon thereafter became obsessed with finding his place before the camera. He could see that what counted in the late-twentieth-century American workplace was not building the stage but appearing on it.

Cal's journey from the Santa Clarita Valley, where he grew up, to the San Fernando Valley was a short one, but his other journey—from building sets to acting on them, from a golden boy on California's surfing coast to a man marketing himself as the very image of a California surfer—was epic. It was an arc of employment any of his compatriots in the porn world would recognize, as would many outside it. For the generations preceding Cal Jammer's, the prevailing system of personal worth was divided between mas-

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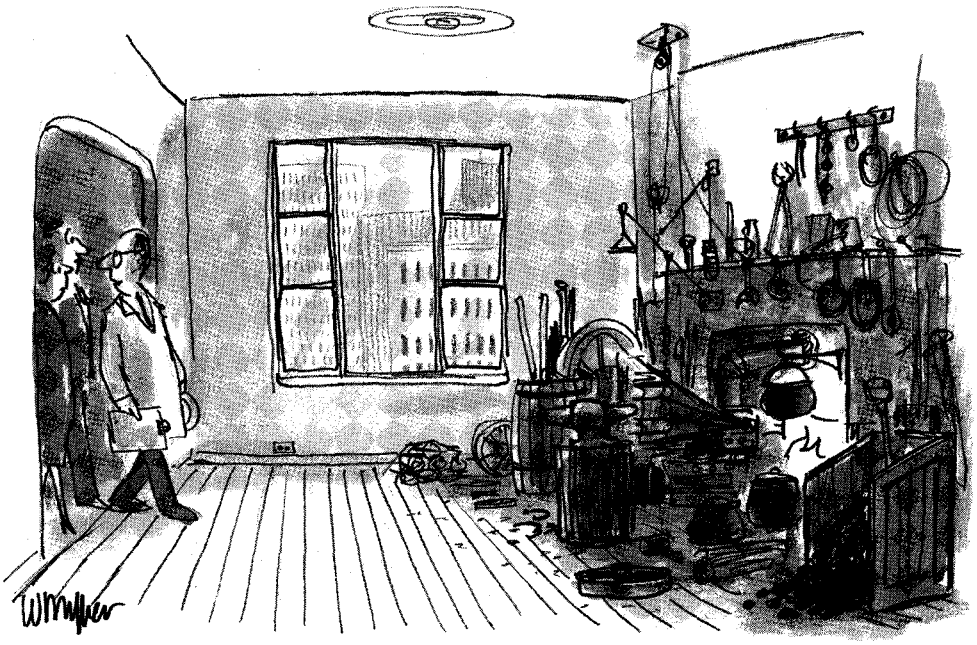

"Another interesting feature of this apartment is the working fireplace."

• •

culine "doing" and feminine "being." Men were applauded for their utility, women for their appearance. Then, suddenly, in the eighties and nineties, ornamental occupations became the employment oases. It was like having consigned the Indians to a barren desert, then discovering oil on the reservation. In the rush to stake a claim in territory that had long been ceded to women, the Cal Jammers of American enterprise have entered a land of mirrors and a million flickering screens, a realm where manhood is displayed, not demonstrated.

Nevertheless, the men of porn cast themselves as the last workingmen of America. They are traditional men affrming traditional utility by showing that the one irrefutable proof of genetic maleness is up and running. "We're the last bastion of masculinity," Margold said. "The one thing a woman cannot do is ejaculate in the face of her partner. We have that power."

Margold fears that the industry, with the rise of cable-ready, stylized filmmaking, is falling prey to "the feminization of Hollywood." He explained, "Even this business is losing its masculine fibre. We're being absorbed into the mainstream, which terrifies me." Already, the X-rated shelves are overrun with what Margold indignantly calls "coffee-table porn," the prettified MTV-style adult videos produced for the so-called couples' market. What Margold bemoans is rooted in a fundamental change in the industry's markets in the last decade—a polarization not all that different from the one dividing the nation's income brackets. Since the mid-eighties "video revolution" and the explosion in cable and hotel programming, the industry has increasingly served two audiences. For the upscale market, a few well-financed corporate behemoths (such as VCA, Vivid, and Metro), which have consolidated to dominate the business, produce big-budget designer erotica featuring faux-aristocratic ladies contorting under chandeliers, or what the porn director Ron Sullivan, a.k.a. Henri Pachard, calls the "semi-erotic, *boring* stuff they put on cable television." It's Victoria's Secret, rated X. Meanwhile, a slew of low-rent producers churn out rock-bottom-cheap videos featuring harsh sex for a downwardly mobile and more despairing market. This is, to quote Sullivan again, "the hard-core, in-the-toilet type of up-against-the-wall bookstore product."

In the cheap productions, the last bastion of masculinity still holds. But it is the glittery upmarket world of cable and high-budget productions that everyone in the business aspires to—and that world is built on feminine glamour. "The video revolution," the screenwriter and porn director Ira Levine said, spelled "the end of the old stag film as an institution, which was essentially an all-male medium for an all-male audience, and it began the advent of consumer porn that people could take home and pop into their VCRs. It changed everything." The Cal Jammers who are part of this feminization feel they have stormed the walls of female ornament to reclaim male prerogative, only to find themselves lost in a garden of gender irony.

The 1992 adult film "Chameleons," directed by the formerly prominent male porn star John Leslie, presents a futuristic male nightmare of where the "feminization" of porn might lead. The leading lady's vampiric effort to claim her lover's body first saps his energies, sending him to bed with the vapors, then threatens to kill him outright. "It's either me or you," she tells him. In their final struggle, the lover saves himself—but only by transforming himself into a woman.

That perception of their vanishing masculine status underlay the heat with which many male porn stars discussed the Cal Jammer story: they attributed his eventual fate to the violence of a gender battle. That is, they blamed his wife. After a yearlong affair with a fledgling porn actress named Cameo, Cal had married a stripper named Jill Kelly. She launched a porn career of her own just after the couple separated, in late 1994—and, according to the men of porn, crushed her husband in the process. "She destroyed him," one of the men told me. "She might as well have put the gun to his head," another said. This was a convenient fiction, one that allowed them to avoid contemplating other crushing forces, and it quickly became the party line. But, as a grieving Jill Kelly observed to me later, the men who put forth this line had "no idea" what had passed between her and Cal, nor could they fathom the depths of her own devastation. The only fact that anyone could state for sure was that on January 25, 1995, Cal Jammer stood on the sidewalk outside Jill Kelly's home, held a gun to his right temple, and pulled the trigger.

DEEP in the San Fernando Valley is an area where the strip malls and condo communities drop away to reveal a prairie of electronics plants and industrial-park tilt-ups, all metallic and windowless and low to the ground. One such warehouse contains Trac Tech, the only pro-

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fessional soundstage in the porn industry. The photographer Ron Vogel opened it a few years ago, to serve the expanding needs of upmarket porn production. Cal Jammer had been modelling for about a year when Vogel, aware of his experience in construction, appointed him to be the studio's master builder. For Cal, the assignment was a calling. To provide the industry with its own state-of-the-art soundstage became his all-consuming vocation. "The epitome of all that epic drama," Vogel recalled, "was the ceiling." For ten days, Cal lay on his back on a scissor lift, twenty-six feet in the air, stapling a special sound-enhancing insulation to the five-thousand-square-foot ceiling. The project required more than twenty-five thousand staples. "It was a superhuman effort," Vogel said. It was, he said, Cal Jammer's "Sistine Chapel."

Two days after Cal's death, I visited Trac Tech to observe the shooting of an upscale production. "Cyberella," a sort of "'Barbarella' in outer space," as the crew member Raven Touchstone described it, involves a female secret cyberagent who travels through history fighting evil and "saves the world." The production company was VCA, one of the industry's titans, and the corporation's healthy balance sheet was evident in the lavish backdrops, the several days spent on shooting, and the substantial crew, which included assistant and technical directors, multiple cameramen and technicians, a stylist, and a caterer. (A low-end production, by contrast, will shoot for one day with one cameraman—who is fortified, if the budget can be stretched, with a pizza delivery.)

This afternoon, the crew was shooting a scene in which a Who's Sexier? contest is broadcast into cyberspace. The scene's drawing card was Sunset Thomas, VCA's current hot commodity, a young woman whose main selling point—though no one will admit it—may be that she looks disconcertingly adolescent. That feature was amplified this day by her hair style—bangs and two bobbed ponytails, à la Cindy Brady—and a cheerleader's outfit. She was playing Susie Flatbush, a contestant in the Who's Sexier? competition. The long-standing and ubiquitous male actor Ron Jeremy was to play the contest's master of ceremonies. And cast as the competition's judge was Zack Adams, who in real life is Sunset's husband and manager. Behind the cameras, members of the crew were muttering ominously; husbands, one of the technical-crew members informed me, rarely function well with their wives on camera.

A porn shoot is an intricately delineated ecology. Directors, while still more or less on top, are increasingly challenged by the rise of the "box-cover girl" and the "contract girl." With the advent of video, the box, not its contents, sells the product, which means that the box-cover girl can sometimes trump her supposed bosses. The big porn companies court this woman's favor by offering her a generous (by porn standards) contract in return for exclusivity. While the number of high-paid contract and box-cover girls is small, their presence seems vast and domineering to the male actors, who speak resentfully of the women's rising fees and prima-donna airs. Vivid's contract girls are perceived as the most indulged; I've heard them referred to as the Vivid Queens. "In the porno chain of command," the porn actor and director Jonathan Morgan said to me despairingly one evening over drinks, the contract girl "can choose who she wants to fuck, where she wants to fuck, the script that she wants to fuck in, what day they are going to fuck."

Unlike the top female performers of the seventies—such as Georgina Spelvin ("The Devil in Miss Jones") or Marilyn Chambers ("Behind the Green Door"), who styled themselves as actresses and sexual adventurers—the contract girls are undressed-for-success career women, making a calculated professional move that will get them into and out of the porn-film industry as quickly as possible and inflate their long-term salaries as exotic dancers. With the explosive growth of table- and lap-dancing stripper clubs, large numbers of dancers have realized that they can quadruple their income simply by appearing on a few porn box covers. They then become "feature dancers" who return to the circuit to make as much as ten thousand dollars a week. This kind of windfall is not available to men, with the exception of a few gay porn stars.

Under the directors and the contract girls is the reliable "male talent," which amounts to fewer than thirty regulars whom the industry can count on for on-call erections. On the "Cyberella" set, Ron Jeremy was holding down that position, as he has in more than a thousand movies, an industry record. The on-command male orgasm is the central convention of the industry: all porn scenes should end with a visible ejaculation. There are various names for it—"the pop shot," "the payoff shot," "the cum shot"—but the most resonant is "the money shot." It is a money shot for

"I'll be honest, Raymond. I really don't give a damn about the wetlands."

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all concerned: for the distributors and filmmakers, who believe the largely male audience wants to see what Ira Levine sarcastically calls "the triumph of the dick"; and for the male actors themselves, who are usually paid by "the scene," as it is decorously called. No ejaculation, no reward—except from some filmmakers who are willing to offer a kill fee.

There are so few men in this upper tier because few men can perform consistently under such circumstances. As much as the Bill Margolds wish to portray porn acting as the last arena of the traditional male work ethic, getting it up isn't the kind of work in which industry guarantees rewards. Quite the contrary, by choosing an erection as the proof of male utility, the male performer has hung his usefulness on the organ that is, as Jonathan Morgan observed, "the one muscle on our body we can't flex." The man must wait for an erection to happen—the agony known in the business as waiting for wood.

Ranked just beneath the regular male talent is a seething and ever-changing mass of B-girls, or "fill-in girls," many of whom either stumble onto the set hollow-eyed and strung out or don't bother to stumble in at all. They are endured as the necessary bane of porn's existence, and disparaged behind their backs—or eventually fired. Below the B-girls, way below, are the new male wannabes, who, if they don't perform, are immediately sent packing. Finally, at the very bottom, in the view of many, are the husbands and boyfriends who claim to be managers or marketing directors for their eminently more marketable mates. The sleaziest of these are called "suitcase pimps." Some of them seek not only a cut of their women's wages but a spot in the camera lights as well.

Off on a sidetrack is the far less hierarchical and more jaundiced society of the technical crew—camera operators, assistant directors, box-cover photographers, and "crew hogs." Some are young film-school graduates who discover upon graduation that they can go to Warner Bros. and carry coffee, or report to 4-Play Video and start as an editor. On set, their moods range from affectlessness to acid sarcasm, both a protective pose and a reasonable response to the reality that watching sex performed for a camera quickly becomes dreary.

On the VCA set this afternoon, nerves were already strained. Ron Jeremy had vanished, just as his scene was at hand. Probably went to stuff his face, growled the crew hogs. Unlike the younger male primpers, who seem to be constantly at the gym or the cosmetic surgeon's office, the hirsute and flabby Jeremy, known in the industry as The Hedgehog, is an unapologetic glutton. He lives, it seems, to gross people out—one of his proudest stunts is auto-fellatio—and the legion of jokes about his girth are, in his view, just advertisements. A few weeks after the shoot, he invited me to his apartment to watch a videotape of a "Beavis and Butt-head" segment in which they snigger endlessly about his paunch. "Isn't this great?" Jeremy crowed, as he sat on the floor before a wide-screen TV, devouring an entire platter of bagels, lox, and cream cheese, which was supposed to be brunch for three. "I don't care what they say about me," Jeremy said cheerfully, as he snaked his tongue along the empty bottom of the deli cream-cheese container, "as long as they spell my name right."

Jeremy finally resurfaced around four, and, jumping into his costume—a cheap shiny tux, gold-lamé cummerbund, pointy shoes, and gigantic sequinned glasses—he bounded onstage to pronounce the start of the Battle of the Cheerleader and the Nurse. "Strip!" he bellowed, with the broad gestures of a circus clown. As the nurse and the cheerleader climbed out of their costumes and clambered onto Zack the judge, the director called out, over and over, "Lots of soft, guys"—a reminder that while "Cyberella" will be released as a hard-core video, the needs of the thriving cable and hotel businesses must be kept in mind. The version that will be re-cut for TV must be entirely "soft," which means, among other things, no erect penises—and no semen.

With the "dialogue" scene, such as it was, completed, the crew hogs hauled in the bed for the main event. Zack Adams stood to one side, psyching himself up for the money shot. "Nobody says that *we* do all the work," he said to me—a common male actors' lament. "The industry is very tough for men. The slightest thing you do wrong, you don't work." Zack said he got into the business after bringing Sunset out to Los Angeles to do modelling, then B movies, and, when none of that panned out, porn. Zack has a degree in business management from the University of Maryland and was, he said, a business consultant for ten years, mostly to clothing retailers. "Marketing is my specialty," he said. "Now I market Sunset" and six other women in the industry. While he acts in porn, too, his and Sunset's marketability—and their wages—are miles apart. She can make more than four thousand dollars a day on a shoot; he is lucky to make three hundred dollars a scene. Zack first entered the business, he admitted, on the back of Sunset. "It's very hard to break in if you don't come in through a girl." It used to be that the man got the job to win over the girl; now he must win over the girl to get the job.

Zack said he rarely had trouble getting wood—that he'd had only three bad days out of a hundred and seventy performances. But the possibility of a failed money shot is a constant anxiety, and the slightest challenge to one's manhood can trigger it. This afternoon, someone had already planted the seed of self-doubt. "See, this is how they put pressure on you," Zack told me. "They said to me, 'It depends on how well you do on this scene whether we use you on Saturday.' "

A crew member overhearing our conversation slapped a hand to his head. Just then, Zack was summoned to the set; the technician watched him go and sighed. "This is not good," he said. "We're going to have wood problems."

Sure enough, half an hour later Zack was still struggling at half mast and the crew members were becoming increasingly impatient. They had made little progress in moving through the paces of "the formula," which requires a set number of sexual positions. In this case, the batting order announced by the director was "Cowgirl (with Girl No. 1), Cowgirl (with Girl No. 2), Doggie, Doggie, Missionary."

"O.K., we'll shoot the soft," the frustrated director said. "Back up on your action a little bit," he told Sunset. "Pick it up on you ripping his shirt." More time passed, and still no "wood." In the next room, the technical director and various crew members sat around the monitor, stifling yawns and picking at the remnants

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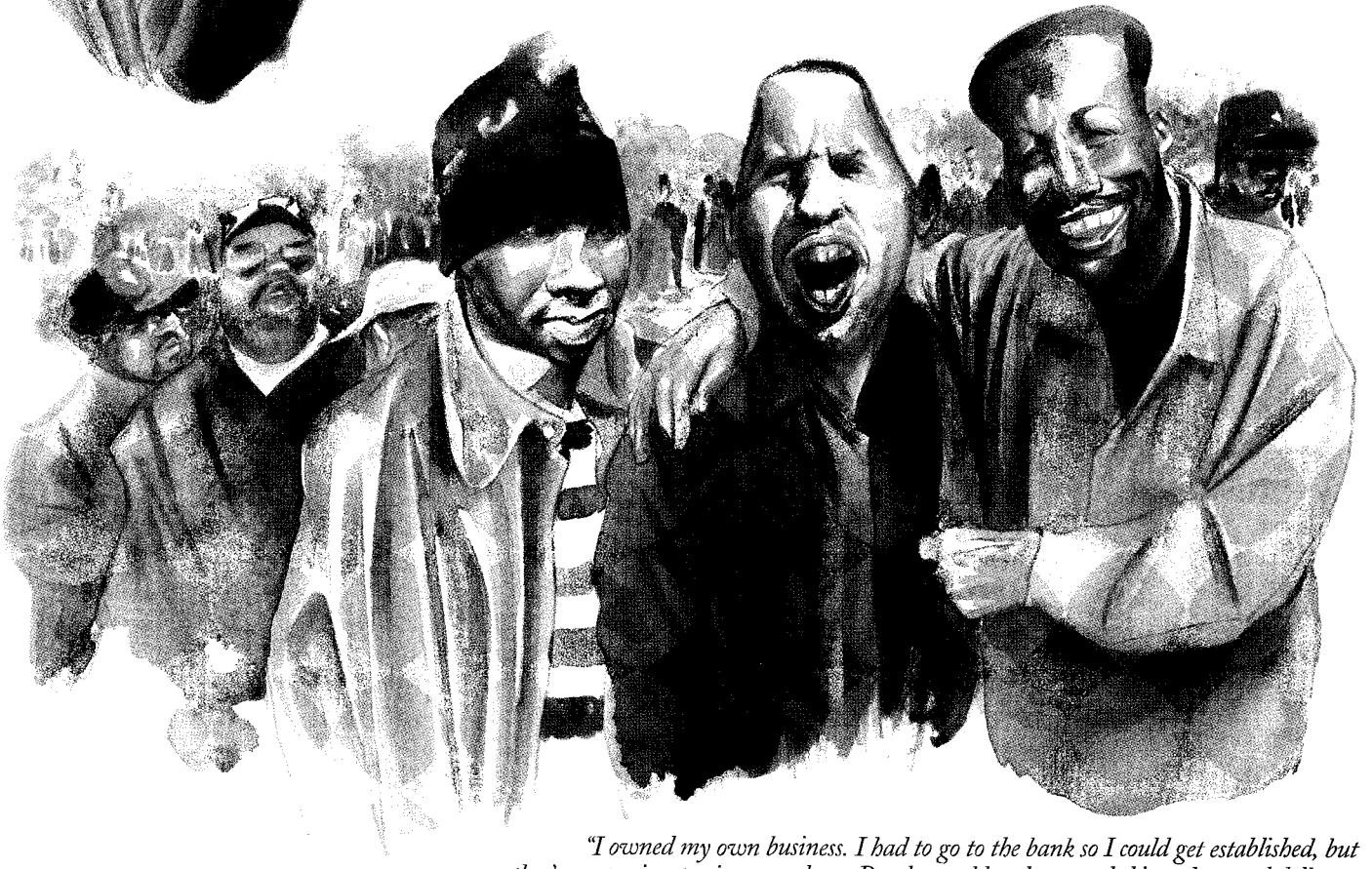
MILLION MAN MARCH

BY STEVE BRODNER

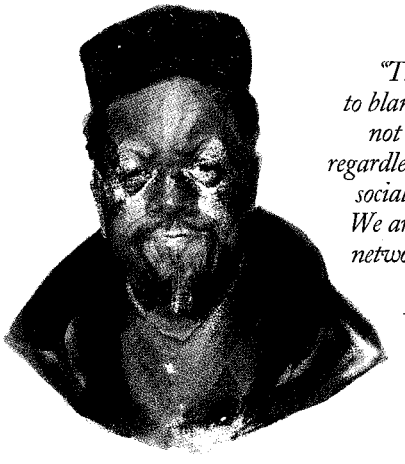
"The strongest thing that we can talk about is the unity that this rally will bring out. The next thing I would like to see done is that we start buying back our community.... Until we start spending money with each other, ain't nobody going to spend money on us."—MICHAEL ROWE, *small businessman, Houston, Texas.*

"It's all a conservative thread. My son listed about seven things they were saying. He says, 'Dad, are these good black men unaware that they're conservatives?'"
—CONGRESSMAN BOB DORNAN, *Republican, California.*



"I owned my own business. I had to go to the bank so I could get established, but they're not going to give me a loan. People would rather spend thirty thousand dollars a year to keep a man incarcerated than give me a thirty-thousand-dollar-a-year job that creates stability."—ANDRE FERRERA (*center*), *Coram, New York.*

"Farrakhan more or less speaks the truth. I have a white Irish priest in my church who said, 'I just want to hear the truth.' He was referring to Farrakhan."
—NATASHA PRATT, *student, University of Maryland.*



"This time, we're not going to blame the white man. We're not going to blame society—regardless of racism, regardless of social and economic injustices. We are saying we are going to network. We are going to bond. We are going to change."
—DAVID PHILLIP LEE, *cable technician, Arlington, Virginia.*

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of the catered repast. At last, the technical director threw down his headset and shouted toward the set, "Guys, take a break!" The crew doused the hot lights and left Zack alone with Sunset, who did her best to "fluff" him back into readiness. The technical director sank back in his chair and groaned, "This is not going anywhere. It's a fucking Slinky."

A sleeping production assistant woke up and wandered down from upstairs. "What's going on?" he asked.

"We're waiting for wood," a crew member said wearily. They all gazed hopelessly at the monitor, where all that remained on Sunset's person was a dangling pair of spiked slippers. "Well, this dispels the myth that high heels give men an erection," another crew member observed.

An hour later, after a lengthy masturbatory effort on Zack's part, the money shot was delivered. By the monitor, the weary production staff fell back in their chairs with a collective release of breath. Zack grabbed his clothes and raced upstairs without speaking to anyone.

"Of the major studs in the history of this business, there are only a handful of names," Bill Margold told me one afternoon as we sat in his darkened one-room office next to World Modeling; he keeps the lights off to effect "the feeling of the womb" for the "porn kids" who might come here seeking counsel. Of the studs currently working, he said, T.T. Boy is "the only one that really qualifies in today's genre as the superwoodsman. T.T. is the perfect example of the video stud, because as video becomes more and more prolific, the quantity overtakes the quality, and T.T. is capable of just knocking them out, one after another after another after another. It's as if he's in the ring with a series of sparring partners and goes through thirty of them in a day and none of them has a face and that's what makes T.T. special. . . . It's high noon, gunslinging time, and T.T. is still walking and they're all lying dead in the street."

A couple of weeks after the "Cyberella" shoot, the veteran porn filmmaker Ron Sullivan was shooting footage for "one of my down-and-nasties" for Caballero Home Video in his down-at-the-heels studio in the Valley. In the eighties, Sullivan shot "graphic, no-prisoners" porn films in New York City for many companies, including Caballero. When Caballero fell on hard times and was sold, its new owner hired Sullivan to rebuild it, which he set out to do by targeting the low end of the market. He joined the overpopulated world of shoestring West Coast operators who generate the "one-day wonders" (so called because they are often shot in one day) that serve an audience craving an endless display of facial cum shots, gang bangs (a recent one, Fantastic Pictures' "The World's Biggest Gangbang," involved a hundred and fifty-one men), and pounding anal sex.

If the Vivid Queen is the crown jewel of upscale "pretty porn," then T.T. Boy is the poster boy of this down-market variety. "T.T. reflects exactly what that sort of porno is about," Caballero's senior video editor Bud Swope said, "where you screw the hell out of the woman and come all over her face. He throws girls around. He pile-drives till they protest. . . . He's just aggression." In an interview in the April, 1995, issue of *Hustler Erotic Video Guide*, T.T. Boy had this to say: "I was a shy little kid when I started, and now I'm just a guy who wants to fuck the shit out of all these girls. Just fuck 'em to death." He then proceeded to deliver the following message to all those women in the business "with big egos": "You don't want to work with me. I'll beat your boyfriends up and spit in your faces. That's what I think of you bitches, and then I'll kick you in the head." There is a certain dutifully scripted quality to this sabre rattling, as though T.T. Boy thought this was the persona his fans expected of him. Or as though, if he didn't play the thug, he was at a loss who to be.

T.T. Boy arrived the morning of the Caballero shoot without his script. Not that it mattered. As he pointed out to Ron Sullivan, in a Brooklyn mouth-full-of-marbles street voice (although he was raised in California), "Hey, I can remember two fuckin' lines." He swung a few mock punches in the direction of the production assistant, but the move seemed more stagy than aggressive. Maybe it was the fact that, mid-swing, he was looking over his shoulder to see himself on the monitor.

"Hey, don't hurt your hands," Sullivan shouted, playing along. "Remember when you showed up that time with a bandage on your face because you got in a fight? You mook!" He gave T.T. Boy an affectionate plug on the shoulder, then handed him a script and sat him in an armchair. T.T. Boy rehearsed, reading out loud, over and over, one of his two lines: "Perfect. My own wife wants to watch me commit a perfect act of infidelity sodomizing her best friend's asshole." But soon his eyes strayed back to the monitor, and he put down the script and watched himself making various toothy grins and grimaces at the camera. He seemed transfixed by the image. Two attractive women in lingerie were stretched out on a bed a few inches from his chair, but they might as well have been in another universe. Finally, Sullivan came over and turned the monitor away.

This was a stripped-down operation with one cameraman. A queen-sized bed was pushed up against a façade of bedroom walls with a fake window overlooking a painted landscape. A comforter had been thrown over a sheetless mattress. The cameraman, the former longtime porn actor Eric Edwards, took a quick break before starting, and scrounged among plastic dishware and congealed Danish—what passes for smorgasbord on the lower-rent sets—assembling a cup of coffee. Edwards started acting in summer stock and repertory and became a full-time porn actor in the late seventies. It was an era when filmmakers took weeks to shoot an X-rated movie, when they had rehearsals and dinner parties, when whole days would go by when they were shooting just dialogue and no sex, when a male actor like Eric Edwards made a thousand dollars a day and had a limo drive him to the airport and had his hand- and footprints immortalized in concrete on the sidewalk outside the Pussycat Theatre, in West Hollywood, as klieg lights swarmed the night sky. "Those were the glory days when you felt like a human being," Edwards said, gazing into his plastic-foam cup. Now the actors "don't know enough to not look into the camera."

"O.K., T.T., we're going straight to sex," Sullivan said. "We're going to full hard-core. No cable. Never hide it. Keep it nasty all the way." T.T. Boy tried to catch my eye, and I realized that in the

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absence of the monitor I was to be his audience. The sex itself seemed of little interest to him; the thrill was being seen. He ground away on the actress, Christina West, with the regularity of a jackhammer, his mind fixed on some invisible distant point, his hips moving as if to a metronome.

After a while, the grinding turned to pounding, the bed and the façade of the bedroom walls rattling in time. I was beginning to feel like an observer on the set of "Earthquake." A large painting over the bed thumped against the wall, threatening to crash down on the performers' heads. Several times, Sullivan entreated T.T. Boy to lighten up. "Now, be careful," Sullivan said. "This woman's got to work for a while." West herself asked for a short break, to apply makeup to her legs, which were bruised. After she had been gone five minutes, Sullivan began to worry. "We've got wood here!" he called after her. At last, she returned, and T.T. Boy climbed back on as if there had been no interruption.

After several clockwork transitions and an endless anal scene, Sullivan, satisfied, said, "O.K., bring it on home anytime." And T.T. Boy, as if hearing the voice of Mission Control, coolly withdrew, waited for the camera to wheel into ideal position, then brought it on home.

"O.K., T.T., we're going to do the second scene back to back," Sullivan said, looking over at his lone male performer to see how much time he needed to refuel. T.T., who was now shovelling Wheat Chex into his mouth from a family-sized box, looked inert, as if he had done nothing but watch television for the last half hour. Which, in a sense, he had. "I'll be ready in five minutes," he said. I recalled a remark that the former porn actor Cyd Morrison had made to me about T.T. Boy: "Basically, the guy is a life-support system for a penis."

Christina West returned from the dressing room in a robe and settled on the couch, a meditations book in her hands. She had a dreamy, distant air about her, as of a feather floating far above the present scene. "I'd heard he was rough," West told me. This was her third time with T.T.; the first was when another actress couldn't handle him and West agreed to step in. "I asked him for that moment of gentleness and he gave me that. He does have an attitude, but it's not his personality. It's what the industry built him up to be."

"Get your polka-dot butt out of my leaves!"

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In the other room, T.T. Boy continued to crunch on cereal. "Women are scared of me," he said between mouthfuls. "They take off." He didn't say more, because by then five minutes had passed and it was time for Round Two. T.T. Boy was, as always, ready.

LIKE an updated version of the Woody Allen childhood scene under the Coney Island roller coaster, the apartment complex where T.T. Boy lives is situated almost directly beneath an exit ramp of the Ventura Freeway. The building is a mere block from World Modeling, just past a "No Outlet" sign at the end of a dead-end street. There are a million complexes like his in Southern California—cracking aggregate-concrete steps with flimsy railings, a parking garage guarded by malevolently grinning metal teeth, a permanent "Now Renting" banner coated in highway dust. The furnishings in T.T. Boy's one-bedroom apartment look as if they were bought in a couple of days, which they were. Over the TV he has mounted a factory-made tomahawk and a bow and arrow, a rare decorative touch. Next to the VCR lies a video of Mike Tyson's "Greatest Hits." The day I visited, a dinner setting for four—plates, bowls, placemats—was arranged on the dining-room table. I asked if he was expecting guests. He looked at his shoes and mumbled that he had placed the dishes out there some time ago, he wasn't sure why. "I just thought it looked homey."

One afternoon, we headed out to a nearby restaurant, and for the next several hours T.T. Boy spoke almost entirely of having been dumped by Amy, his girlfriend of two years. "I watched over her," he said. "I took care of her better than her mother." Amy said later that during their relationship he had become violent and choked her several times. She even obtained a restraining order against him. "I didn't hit her," T.T. Boy told me, "but I pushed her around."

In any case, T.T. Boy explained their breakup this way: "She went off with Hollywood people." One of the painful truths of this business is the double standard imposed on the personal lives of the performers: it's chic for a man outside the industry to date a woman who has been involved in porn (witness Charlie Sheen's public romance with Ginger Lynn), but

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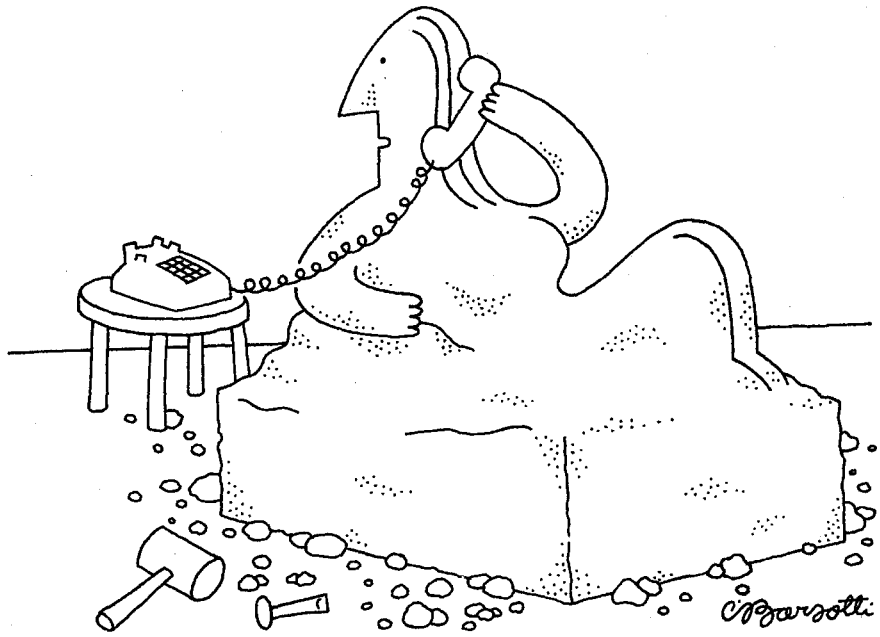

"No, but I can take a message."

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for a woman on the outside to date a male porn actor is slumming.

The couple split up for good soon after a friend landed Amy a job as a massage therapist on a Hollywood set. T.T. vowed to move out of the X-rated world and "sold everything to get out of the business, to make her happy." He even sold his BMW, enrolled in acting school, and accompanied Amy to the set one day to seek a position with the stunt coordinator. The visit yielded no employment, but T.T. was recognized by the crew—by "all those hypocrites" who "watch these movies but think you're a piece of shit," as he put it. The next day, Amy called him from the set, crying. The crew members were shunning her now, she told him; they thought she was trash by association. Not long after, she broke up with him.

While the villains in T.T. Boy's stories are generally women—girlfriends, girlfriends' mothers, girlfriends of his girlfriends, porn starlets—the figure who first and forever broke his heart, it seems, was a man. After his mother's death in a car wreck when T.T. was four, he and his younger brother were brought up, on and off, by their father, who owned mining and heavy-equipment operations and who worked his sons like company mules. It is a story T.T. Boy is reluctant to tell. I glean some of the harshest details not from him but from his brother. The father put the two boys to work mining azurite and malachite when they were very young. By age eight, T.T. was breaking and carrying rocks all summer long under the stone-hard sun outside Baker, a tiny California desert town near the Nevada line. During his grammar-school years, he was often in the mines toting hundred-pound gunnysacks. By junior high, he was repairing and driving his father's heavy equipment, sometimes until two in the morning. When T.T. resisted, his brother told me, their father often beat him. The father withdrew T.T. from high school so he could work full time. For fourteen to sixteen hours a day, he was put to work on such tasks as scouring the insides of cement tanks, where the temperature reached as high as a hundred and fifty degrees and the chemicals burned his skin. "Nobody worked like I worked," T.T. told me, in a voice half-proud, half-numb. "I was like a robot. He programmed me like a machine."

He and his brother expected to take over the business, until their father's expensive vacations and private planes pushed it into bankruptcy. T.T.'s uncle, who is a Los Angeles bus driver, helped find T.T. a job in porn. His younger brother, under the name Lex Baldwin, became a gay-porn star and a cover model for numerous gay magazines. (In his personal life, he said, he remains heterosexual.)

In spite of the virtual indentured servitude and the broken inheritance, T.T. Boy pays tribute to his father as a "man of power." His denunciations he reserves for a few "powerful" and "evil" women of porn, whom he perceives as threatening his livelihood. "The thing that irritates me is that the girl has so much power," he said. "Lots and lots of times, the girls say, 'Oh, T.T., he's so rough.' I say, 'How am I supposed to know? Just ask me.' Instead, she'll tell the other girl, who hasn't worked with me. I'm losing all kinds of work because of girls like that."

In the weeks following Cal Jammer's suicide, T.T. Boy's broadsides against "girls like that" would invariably segue into diatribes against Jammer's wife. "I see lots of parallels," he said, between his and Cal's experiences with the women in their lives. "He quit because she couldn't handle it anymore," he said of Cal and his wife, Jill. "He quit for her. Then she broke it up and she got back in the business." What T.T. Boy preferred not to get into was his and other male actors' petty cruelties to Cal on the set, ridiculing his lacklustre performances. While T.T. Boy acknowledged that he was "a little mean" to Cal, it was Cal's wife whom he'd anointed "the wicked bitch." How would he have dealt with Jill if he had been in Cal's shoes? T.T. Boy stared hard at me. Cal "wasn't very violent. In my case, I might be too far gone and . . . be trouble."

I'm not sure whether this, too, is for effect, another mock punch, another flourish for the ever-present camera in T.T. Boy's head, or whether his father's violence is the one aspect of his inheritance he did receive. Then again, maybe it is just the loud clamorings of a young man alone, trying to beat back the silence of an apartment where the table is always set for a family of four and no one is coming home.

HIGH above T.T. Boy's rental unit, on a scenic curve of Mulholland Drive overlooking the Valley, sprawls the home of one of the most successful male actors in the business: Jeff Stryker. He is one of only two men featured in Leisure Time Products' mail-order ad in *Penthouse* for "200 Superstars of Video." (The other, the legendary John Holmes, is dead.) Stryker's image sells videos, magazines, sexual aids, playing cards, greeting cards, calendars, T-shirts, CDs ("Wild Buck"), and haute couture (designer Thi-

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erry Mugler's). Even more profitable than his acting career are sales of what Stryker refers to as his "rubber goods." The mass-marketed mold of his penis, Jeff Stryker's Realistic, is reportedly the No. 1-selling specialty dildo. The Realistic is, in fact, not—it's an inch longer than the real thing. It is marketed not as a novelty or a party-store gag but as a luxury item. The cheapest selection in the Realistic line is fifty-nine dollars.

Stryker has figured out a way to cross that great divide between masculine utility and feminine ornament. "My image," he told me, "can sell a heterosexual video stronger than any girl." He has crossed the gender divide literally: half his porn credits are gay, half straight. But in both he plays the dominant male, the "top," as it's known in the gay-porn business. "In straight films, the male actor is usually a prop," Stryker said to me one morning in his home, where weight-training machines dominated the living room. These porn actors, he went on, "tried to build themselves into the almighty stud . . . but these guys are nothing." Stryker went in the other direction: Instead of building himself up into a superman dynamo, he broke himself down from an organic whole and sold us back the pieces. Instead of making himself into a "prop" in a female show, he turned his body into a display case for product placement. His success is based not on T.T.-style pile-driving but on an understanding of the modern market. The ladder that Stryker scaled to his exalted heights is all about the image, not the act.

In fact, his first film entailed no "acting" at all. "The first movie was a total failure as far as I was concerned," he said, "because I couldn't perform. They used a stunt dick." But it hardly mattered. As Stryker would come to understand better than any of his male colleagues, appearance has become even more important than performance. And his camera-ready body was sufficiently beautiful to inspire a bidding war that raised his fee from three thousand dollars for a scene in his first film (gay porn tends to pay actors far higher wages than straight porn) to thirteen thousand five hundred dollars for a scene in his second, which required a stunt dick as well. By the time he shot his fourth film, "Bigger Than Life," Huge Video paid him forty thousand dollars.

Eventually, Stryker broke with Huge, ostensibly, he said, over the issue of a Corvette that Huge refused to buy him, but the real issue was his desire to, as he put it, "take control" of the marketing of his theatrical persona. He formed his own company, Stryker Productions, and later launched a second outfit, Jeff's Provisions, to market his product lines. His only real provision was his image. "Jeff Stryker, he's a product to me," the human Stryker said. But much to his dismay, he discovered that none of the fans who consumed this product wanted him to tinker with it; they wanted the Jeff Stryker that the production companies who discovered him had created.

If he feels cornered by the expectations of his fans, he draws emotional sustenance from another responsibility, one initially thrust upon him. After a woman with whom he'd had a brief affair filed a palimony suit against him, he fought the suit and won custody of their son, Joe. In the house on Mulholland Drive, unlike T.T. Boy's, dinner is set for an actual family, albeit a family of two, and the videos on the shelves here are not of Tyson's knockouts but of Beauty's tenderness for the Beast.

"Are you coming home in the light or in the dark?" Joe, who is five, asked his father, as Stryker and I prepared to leave their house one morning, after Joe had conducted several comprehensive tours of the house for my benefit—tours that involved lengthy stops at the aquarium and the video-game console.

"The light," the father assured his son.

"O.K., then," Joe said, standing on tiptoe for a goodbye kiss before returning to his toy-strewn bedroom and the watchful eye of one of his two nannies.

Stryker keeps the house clear of all pornography and won't even allow cable for fear Joe—or Little Joe, as he calls him—might stumble on the wrong channel. What does he tell Joe that he does for a living? " 'I work,' I tell him. 'I work.' " Stryker would like his son never to know, though he realizes that that's unlikely. But he has a plan. A few years ago, he bought three hundred acres of undeveloped land in rural Missouri. The land boasts a twenty-acre lake. And on it Stryker has built his fantasy gentleman's estate: a six-thousand-five-hundred-square-foot house, in which "Joe's bedroom is bigger than this whole house," he said, and "Joe's bathroom is all marble." In Joe's ceiling he drilled five hundred holes and strung Christmas lights through them, "so at

"You're the only one I know still calling people 'Über' this and 'Über' that."

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night it looks like all the stars in the sky are on his ceiling." Stryker built a nine-foot hurricane fence topped with barbed wire to encircle the entire property; each of the two entrances is guarded by a nine-foot brick wall and two five-hundred-pound lion statues.

Stryker picked up a framed photo from his office desk and handed it to me. It was a picture of him and Joe on the lake, fishing. "Look at how happy he is," Stryker said intently, focussed only on Joe's delighted expression. "Me and him alone, we go to the big house. Me and him alone, we travel around. Me and Joe, that is the family unit." He put down the picture, then picked it up again. "It's my primary function, my primary everything, protecting this child, making sure he has the best life possible." I took a closer look at the photograph. Joe stood in the middle of the rowboat, and he sported one of those ecstatic, ear-to-ear grins that rarely survive childhood. Stryker was in the prow, standing solemnly, his muscles rippling. He was posing, fifteen hundred miles away and shielded by a nine-foot wall, but still a servant to the Image.

"I'm like a mirror," Stryker said to me later as we sat in his hall-of-mirrors office, surrounded by posters and glossies and molds of himself and his phallus. The reflection has replaced the man who lives in front of the looking glass, and Stryker is not unaware of this self-immolation. "They built this person," he said in a raspy old-man's voice, gazing at a pin-up photo of himself as if contemplating a stranger. His face looked crumpled and deflated, as if the tenant behind it had gone off in a

BENTON DOWNTOWN

Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), that muscular realist, painted few pictures of New York, even though he lived in the city for more than two decades. But when he did paint one, it offered a glimpse of the urban artist he might have been. This oil sketch, done in the autumn of 1945, shows a corner of the annual Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit, in Greenwich Village. Never exhibited or published, it recently turned up at auction—in time for its fiftieth anniversary—and quickly disappeared into a private collection in Manhattan.

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hurry without informing the landlord. "And this person does what it's supposed to do. And I guess this person is me."

"THE exploitation of the male" in the adult business, the longtime porn star Nina Hartley told me, "is very distinct, in that he must divide his dick from his heart." This wasn't as true in the old days, she said, when "it was much more leisurely, and it was more of a camp where you hung out, had camaraderie. Now . . . it's much more assembly-line nature." And those who can't shut their hearts and minds off, she said, get chewed up in the gears. Cal Jammer, Hartley said, "had a heart to break," and it was still connected to his penis.

Cal did not have T.T. Boy's metronomic abilities. Much to his frustration, he often found his erections held hostage to his feelings. But he also didn't want the pile-driver reputation. He wanted to be, like Stryker, a box-cover boy. And, to a certain extent, he succeeded; it is rare for a male actor to make it onto the box, and Cal had more box appearances than most. He even headlined in a video, a takeoff of "Batman," which was to be his big break. The video, however, was wretched even by porn standards, and was recalled, soon after its release, over a copyright-infringement dispute.

Cal compensated for his lack of cocksmanship by marketing himself around the industry as a carefree, windjammin' California boy. He sank substantial sums into the development of his aura: the most expensive sports gear, the Jet Skis, the speedboat, the sports car, the fanciest fluorescent surfer duds, the gym and tanning-salon memberships. The surfer-boy image buoyed his career to some extent, but it neither reflected nor assisted him in his more personal quest, one that drove him to buy a condo at the earliest opportunity and furnish it as befitted not a beach-bum bachelor but a nineteen-fifties nesting couple. He assembled all the trappings of Middle American family life as advertised on TV: the camping gear, the barbecue pit, the volleyball net. "He really wanted to be a father, a husband," said Katina Knapp, Ron Vogel's office manager, who served as Cal's maternal confidante at the studio for many years. "He never mentioned his father," she said, "but he was very into family."

Soon after he began acting in porn, Cal found a ready-made family and persuaded them, for a time, to move into his domestic bower. He met Cameo, a single mother, on her first porn shoot; the video was "Behind You All the Way." Cameo had just divorced and moved to Los Angeles from Colorado, and she needed a home for herself and her five-year-old son. Cal, as Cameo recalled, was eager to play the gentleman and protector, opening doors, taking her arm. When her ex-husband stalled in sending her son to Los Angeles, Cal gallantly volunteered to fly to Colorado and act as bodyguard while she retrieved her child.

There were some less appealing aspects of his traditional-family-man performance. "He was very strict about the way I kept the house," Cameo recalled. "It had to be absolutely spotless." He also didn't want her to return to college, as she had intended, and didn't really want her to work at all. But he desperately needed her income to help pay his mortgage and utility bills, so he let that part of the "Father Knows Best" picture slide for the time being.

Cameo wasn't sure where Cal had acquired such notions of traditional family life. He rarely spoke of his own family, except to express yearning or bitterness about his father. In fact, one of the first times she saw Cal angry was over an incident involving his father. "His father sent him a ring for his birthday," Cameo recalled, "and he got really mad about the ring and threw it across the room." Cameo, bewildered, tried to calm him down, but he was inconsolable. "It was turquoise. And he said, 'If my father knew me better he wouldn't have bought me a turquoise ring. It just goes to show you my father doesn't know me.' "

Cameo's own vision of family life was more informed by feminism than by fifties television. "Everything was always 'his,' and I just said, 'How can I marry someone and have an equal relationship with somebody where everything is his?' " Eventually, without his knowledge, she signed a contract with Arrow Film and Video, requesting a two-thousand-dollar advance so she could put down a deposit on her own apartment. "I finally just had to go behind his back," Cameo said. Otherwise, "I would have always constantly been under his thumb and there in that apartment to clean it forever." When Cal heard about Cameo's contract with Arrow, he stormed onto her set. He found her in the makeup chair and "threw a big stink," she recalled. Then he charged into the parking lot and let the air out of her tires.

In the wake of the breakup, Cal began to have more problems, "breaking down on the set"—the male talent's euphemism for a lost erection. His insecurity was not exactly diminished by the merciless jeering from the other male actors. From time to time, the situation would become too much and Cal would return to building sets. But set design provided little in the way of money or recognition, and soon he was badgering directors for another shot, until one day someone would need a stunt dick and there he'd be, ready to get back into the game. The on-again, off-again dance continued for several years—and the apprehension that caused him to flee the stage was the same that caused him to return. Cal's "whole perspective was fear of male performance anxiety," the actor Cyd Morrison said. "That was his life force."

"I'LL tell you one thing," Nick East said to me. "The definition of a man is gone." We were sitting in his apartment, a one-room guest cottage in North Hollywood which you entered from an oil-stained back alley cluttered with trash cans. "Now, remember what I told you," he greeted me at the door. "This apartment is not a reflection of who I am." Nick dropped onto the couch and reached for the remote control, desultorily flipping channels on a giant TV screen—his only possession of any significance.

Nick East used to share an apartment with Cal, but Nick said he was still too upset about Cal's death to talk about that time, and became angry when I pressed it. What he wanted to talk about was lost manhood.

In Nick East's history of gender relations, the golden age is located in the forties and fifties, when, "if a man said something, women took him at his word and acted accordingly." The man had a job that lasted and a wage that went further than a weekly run to the A. & P. At the center of Nick East's dream of a Happy Valley past is a father who takes care of them all. "Back when my dad was able to support three children and a wife who didn't work and buy a house when he was twenty-three" is how a typical Nick East

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sentence begins. What made that possible? "Because the workforce was not flooded with females," Nick East said, suddenly angry. "The government tricked our women into working, and women became men."

Nick East's father is an electrician, a proud union man. Nick, the youngest of three children who grew up in the Midwest, joined the Navy directly out of high school, then got married and quit the Navy, but the jobs he found in civilian life could barely support him, much less his wife. He sold copiers, then cars. "That's all I did," he said. "I sold things." His wife moved back in with her mother in California and found a job at a dental-products firm. Nick went looking for a factory job, figuring it would pay better; the union world had done well by his father. But Nick East found a manufacturing world that no longer manufactured a middle class. He worked in an aluminum plant that was hiring only nonunion labor, seven days a week, twelve hours a day. "I make more now," he pointed out.

He drove to California to win back his wife, but she wasn't interested in being won. He moved to Ohio, where his mother and stepfather lived, but he couldn't find steady work. Finally, he held his nose and took a job at Burger King: "Eight hours of 'Would you like fries with that?' " The night after his first day on the job, he had a nightmare. "They had locked me in a Burger King and made me work there." The next morning, he found himself frozen in panic before the franchise doors. "So, I returned my uniform at the drive-through window." Soon after, he moved to California and auditioned at World Modeling.

"That was 1991—four years!" Nick East said. In today's market, that rates as a job with longevity. "The business saved my life. It gave me something to go on with."

As Nick surfed through the cable selections, he hit the Playboy channel, and, glancing over, I jolted up in my seat. "Hey, that's you!" He shrugged. "What movie is it?" I asked. He didn't know; he's made too many to keep track. "I'm always on TV," he said, without enthusiasm. "I'm on every day of the week." He sat and stared blankly at the image of his thrusting hips.

"I know I'm nothing," he said. "Though most of the world has seen my face, I'm nothing because I didn't *do* anything."

"Dearly Besequinned . . ."

But one day, he said, he would do something to make himself "worthy" of real public recognition; and he would know that day had arrived "when I'm on the talk shows—the next O. J. Simpson, not that I'm going to kill somebody, but the next media sensation—when all the 'Hard Copy' shows, when the world is going to pay attention."

If he is on TV every day of the week and still thinks of himself as "nothing," I asked Nick, then what must Cal Jammer have thought of himself, an actor who was a mere spear carrier by comparison? But Nick would have none of it. As far as he was concerned, that was beside the point. The relevant facts, he said, were these: Cal's wife "asks him to get out of the business. He got out. She wanted a divorce. She got into the business. . . . As someone told me, Cal said, 'This is for you, babe,' and shot himself in the head." Nick leaned back on the couch and closed his eyes for a moment. "She tortured him, which is the way that the sexes have changed."

Nick sat up and reached in back of the couch and pulled out, much to my surprise, a Bible. He had been reading it lately, he said, because he was looking for "direction," thinking about quitting the business, and working on a memoir that he said was "about the way home." He wanted to read me his favorite passages, and turned to John, Chapter 14. "I will not leave you desolate," he read, his face catching the light of his own image still flickering on the Playboy channel. "I will come to you." He paused, then turned to Chapter 10. "This is the most intense part of the Bible," he said, and then read, "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

I borrowed his memoir-in-progress to read that night. It turned out to be less an account of a life than a mystical wish fulfillment, in which a "guardian angel" materializes one day as Nick is driving cross-country and promises to be his divine guide through life. The angel first appears to a grateful Nick East in the clothes and guise of his father.

TONY MONTANA and his Shih Tzu, Luli, were languishing by the slime-covered fountain in front of a crumbling mansion in Pasadena one day last March. Tony was waiting for his next scene and filling me in on what he would have liked to say at Cal's funeral a week earlier if only the minister had let him. "Nobody knew that he was dying inside. Nobody knew anything," Montana said, as his voice began to wobble and he scrabbled in his bag for his sunglasses. "I don't know what happened," he said, blinking back tears, "because to tell you the truth Cal Jammer was the most positive person I ever met in

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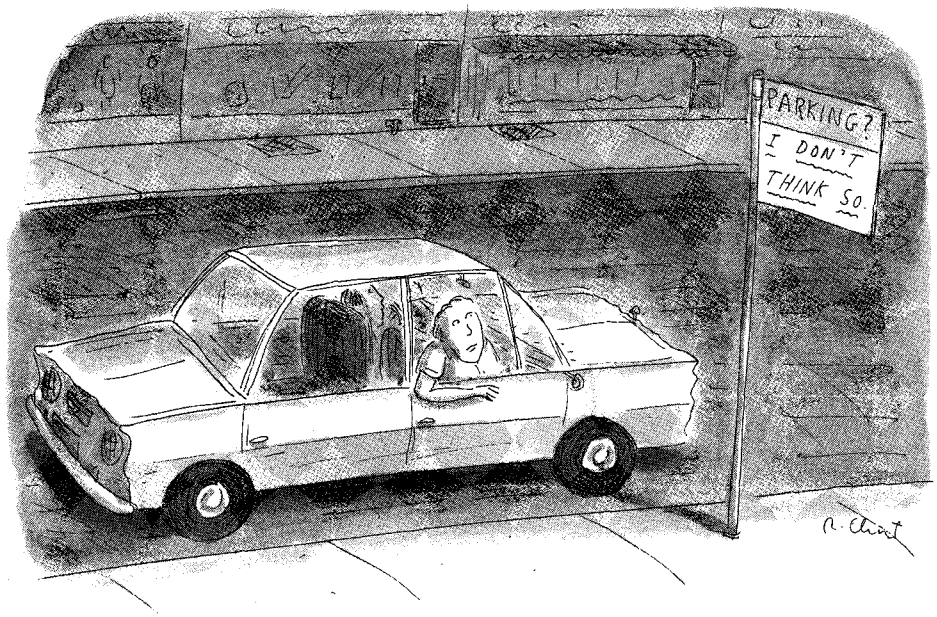

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my life. The first time I met him, I go 'Who the hell are you?' and he goes 'Cal Jammer, dude! Number One Surfer!' "

The movie Montana was shooting was "sort of 'Scarface' with Italians," he said, set in Chicago during Prohibition, and Montana was Frank LoBianco, owner of "the baddest night club. I have the most beautiful women. I have a wife, or, well, I guess wife or possession, you could call it. Her name is Victoria, played by Dallas."

A figure emerged from the mansion, and Tony gestured frantically and yelled, "Hey! Dallas's husband!" A young man in his late twenties, Austin McCloud, joined us at the fountain. Tony told him, "Not yesterday but the day before, I had the best sex scene I've had in a long time and I had it with Dallas." He waited for a reply. McCloud said nothing.

"I'm serious!" Montana said.

McCloud told me that Dallas kissed only him; it was one of the "rules" they had agreed on. "And I have to choose all the guys, actually."

"Why, thank you," Montana said. "I didn't know that."

"Well," McCloud said, "she comes out with a list that she wants to work with, and then—"

"So am I ranking Number One on that list?"

Austin McCloud belongs to a certain subset of the male porn community: he is his wife's manager and acts only occasionally himself. He is one of a group of men who, for one reason or another, have chosen to relinquish the charade of themselves as co-stars. Unlike Zack Adams, these men don't have illusions of cinematic glory. Still, they cling to their own set of fictions.

A few weeks later, I visited Dallas and Austin McCloud at their home in the Valley, a two-story tract house at the stub end of a suburban street. It was what I have come to think of as a porn performer's home: large rooms that echo from the emptiness, walls without pictures, a marble-veneer fireplace without logs. Furniture is sparse, usually an oversized white sectional couch, no bookshelves, and a giant television set suitable for a sports bar. The home of Dallas and Austin more or less fit this description, with one variation: there were children's toys, and from upstairs came the tinkling giggles of small voices. "They're watching 'The Lion King,' " Dallas said, with a smile. She was dressed in sweats and wore no makeup, and looked like she preferred it that way. She settled on the couch, resting her head on Austin's shoulder.

"We met in McDonald's," Austin told me. "My car kept cutting off going through the drive-through." Dallas was nineteen, and was working at a McDonald's in Nashville to save money for college. She had "a 3.987 grade-point average." Austin, twenty, was selling car phones. "I drove up to the second window and I saw Dallas standing there and I thought, That's the girl I'm going to marry," he said. Several months later, in the summer of 1988, she was pregnant, and in August they married.

That Christmas, Austin, the son of an architect, enlisted in the Air Force as an air-traffic controller. The couple had been uninsured, and, he said, "we were scared we couldn't afford the kid." As it was, Dallas said, "we were paying doctor bills with cash." The Air Force sent Austin to Rapid City, South Dakota, where Dallas worked as a waitress and a secretary at a retirement home, and both of them sold real estate. But, even supplemented, Air Force wages were insufficient to support their growing family, and soon they were back in Nashville, where Austin drove trucks and tried to launch a transportation service for indigent handicapped patients. But when the state switched to a managed-care program, Austin said, he couldn't get reimbursed for his Medicaid patients, and within six months he had to file for bankruptcy. Then Dallas got laid off from her job as a store manager. That's when she began waitressing at Déjà Vu, a stripper bar.

One thing led to another, which is to say Dallas realized that she could make between six hundred and eight hundred dollars a night dancing without her clothes. They bought a house. Dallas went to the grocery store, giddy with hundred-dollar bills in her purse. Austin found an agent in Florida who advised the couple to move to California and make some porn films; with a few box covers, he said, Dallas could clear twenty-five hundred dollars a night as a feature dancer. They sold everything and reported to World Modeling the morning after they arrived. By that evening, Dallas was at her first gig, a video that Ron Jeremy was directing. She worked seven days a week for a full month.

In the first scene that first night, Austin was allowed to play her lover. "We wanted to say that we would just work with each other," Austin said, but "you're going to lose about seventy-five per cent of work if you say you're the only guy that will work with her." So now he performs as her manager.

According to the McClouds, Dallas's fan club now has about a hundred thousand members, at a twenty-five-dollar membership fee. She has several 900

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lines, a mail-order catalogue hawking clothing, and custom-made videos that range in price from three hundred to five thousand dollars. And now the talk shows are calling. The meaning of a hundred-thousand-member fan club became real to Dallas and Austin, they said, when they attended their first Consumer Electronics Show and a hundred photographers mobbed them. "I was surprised that they knew who we were," Austin said. "That's when we figured out we had a name." Of course, "we" didn't have a name. "They were all yelling for Dallas."

Sometimes this knowledge becomes difficult for Austin to bear. "I went through a month feeling I was not needed," Austin said. "I mean, I do a lot of work. I know for a fact that I do more work than she does. But the fact is that they are not paying me."

Dallas touched his shoulder. "It's hard for Austin," she said, "from a man's point of view."

Austin said, after a while, "If she really stuck to her guns, she could do it all on her own. If she got tough, she wouldn't need me."

In the porn community this season, all conversational roads seem to lead to Cal, and this discussion was no different. "You know," Austin volunteered, "Cal called the night he killed himself." That night, however, Austin was upset himself, having "lost it" and blown up on the set and then having had a fight with Dallas—and he wouldn't take the call. So Dallas had talked to Cal. "He was mumbling on about lots of weird stuff. He was like 'Well, how do the two of you handle it, because me and my wife, I don't know what to do.' "

Dallas recalled that Cal "would always talk for [his wife]. Like, '*We're* gonna be doing a scene,' '*We're* gonna do this.' It was always a *we*." Austin said that Cal told everyone that his wife "got into the business just to make him jealous." But Austin didn't think so. "The reality of it is she got into the business and decided she didn't need Cal."

CAL JAMMER met his wife, Jill Kelly, about two years after his breakup with Cameo. It was the porn star and producer Tyffany Million who introduced them. Cal had tried to date Million a few years earlier. At the time, she had just emerged from an abusive relationship, and she had a baby. He mistook that, she said, for neediness, for her needing to be saved. "What he didn't realize," she said, "was I was *strong*." She went out with him a few times, but his intense possessiveness disturbed her. "The *first* date he was talking to me like I was already his wife. It was, 'You're not going to date other guys.' "

At twenty-nine, Tyffany Million is an example of a new kind of woman in porn—one who is moving behind the camera. A few years ago, she launched Immaculate Video Conceptions, and the videos she has created assert a feminist point of view in a playful rather than a hectoring way and without the self-conscious fastidiousness of porn designed for a female audience, which tends toward a cloying, Hallmark view of sex.

In the winter of 1993, Tyffany Million brought her friend Jill Kelly to the Consumer Electronics Show, in Las Vegas. They knew each other from dancing at the Mitchell Brothers O'Farrell Theatre, in San Francisco, and Tyffany had told Jill how she could triple her dancing salary by making a few porn videos. "Tyffany was going to be my guide," Jill Kelly recalled. "I just wanted to do girl-girl scenes," she said, because it seemed safer, less humiliating, somehow. This preference for "girl-girl scenes" is shared by many female performers. "Most girls would rather do girl-girls, because it's less mucky," the porn star Sarah-Jane Hamilton told me. "You don't have to sit on their lap for an hour before and tell them how great they are. With a girl, you can just chat in makeup."

The first night, Cal Jammer spotted Jill at the bar at Bally's and promptly took the adjacent stool. At twenty-one, Jill Kelly had the long lines of a dancer. She gave Cal a second look, too. "He was beautiful," she said. He invited her to a party in one of the suites. They sat in a corner and Cal snapped open his briefcase to show her his "book," a photo album of his glossies from video appearances. "He always carried it around with him." They talked until the sun came up, or, rather, Cal did: "He said he wanted to start directing his own movies. He talked about getting out of it and moving into directing and producing." He poured his heart out to her. And Jill, who had danced in front of men for five years and knew "what men are like," felt touched by the neediness she sensed, the vulnerability. "The feeling was 'God, he is so sweet. He's the sweetest guy in the world.' "

The following day, he escorted her around with an excess of courtliness, pull-

"You've had a stone in your shoe for the last twenty years."

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ing out her chair with a flourish, paying for dinner, asking permission to hold her hand. Jill was working at the time at the T & A club, in Upland, California, contemplating her next move. The first night back, Cal invited her to his house and talked about how *he* should be her guide into the business instead of Tyffany, how much he could "help" her. She said she'd think about it. A week or so later, she became seriously ill with a viral infection. Cal came charging to the rescue, ferrying her to doctors and paying the doctors' bills. A month later, on Valentine's Day, they were married, in the Little Brown Church in Canyon Country. The preacher, whom neither of them knew, called Cal "Larry" throughout the ceremony.

A couple of weeks after the marriage, Cal announced that he didn't want her to go into the business after all. " 'I love you too much—I don't want you with those guys,' " she recalled his telling her. "I said O.K. 'Oh, he must really love me.' "

Jill recalled that Cal wanted very much to be "the provider." "He wanted to work at a legitimate studio, like CBS, and get in the union and get benefits," she said. "He wanted to have a normal job. And he wanted me to stay at home and have kids and go to church on Sundays." But even if Jill wanted to stay home, which she didn't, the woman's wages still paid most of Cal Jammer's bills. From her dancing income, Jill bought the groceries and paid the utilities, the insurance, and half his mortgage. After he died, she discovered that he was five months behind in the mortgage payments; the bank was about to foreclose.

Cal's porn career was being plagued again with the old "wood problems"; at home, he could talk of nothing else. "Cal felt like he wasn't a *man*" because he couldn't perform, Jill said. "He dwelled on it too much. He cared about it too much." And after a while he looked for other people to blame. "He'd come home every day pissed off because So-and-So wouldn't hire him, pissed off because 'this bitch' wouldn't work with him, pissed off because she wanted him to wear a rubber," Jill said. "He was so unhappy."

Jill found out Cal had been cheating on her, she said. She left him, but then they reconciled. Cal suggested they both get into the business, then changed his mind and told Jill he was going to leave the business "for her." Jill told him, "Don't quit it for me, quit it for yourself." She could see how such an unasked-for "sacrifice" might be thrown back in her face later.

Once out of the business, however, Cal fell into a deeper gloom; weeks went by when all he would do was play video games and drive around aimlessly in his truck. To make up for the lost income, Jill started dancing double shifts seven days a week at Venus Faire. Cal took the occasional odd job building sets, repairing friends' houses damaged in the 1994 earthquake. "He got really depressed," she said. His criticisms of her turned ugly. On a Colorado rafting trip with friends, in the summer of 1994, he suddenly began screaming at her, calling her "a fucking bitch." On the drive home, he continued to yell and, after she kicked the dash of his truck, snapping one of the plastic air vents, he grabbed her and "started socking me." She fought back, but the next day she was the one with the bruises.

A month after the rafting trip, they went camping on the coast and he lit into her, saying how he hated her and how he had got out of the business for her and now his career was ruined. She finally said, "Fine, then I'll leave." In September, 1994, she moved out. "I told him I was going into the business, and I was going on where I left off with my life." He told her, Jill recalled, that "this was *his* business, that I had no right invading his business, that I had my dancing to fall back on." She asked him, "Are you going to support me?"

The day she moved out, Cal had lined up a scene.

At the 1995 Adult Video News Awards, Tyffany Million was sitting at a table close to the stage, booing the repeat winner. Three times she booed him—as his movie was announced as Best-Renting Tape of the Year, Best-Selling Tape of the Year, and Best Overall Marketing Campaign. When he walked by on his way to collect one of the trophies, she hissed and said, "Pig! Pig!" When he stepped up to the mike, she yelled, "Only in America can a wife batterer become a star!"

If John Wayne Bobbitt heard any of Million's heckling, he showed no notice. He had his own words to speak onstage. "I'd like to end this all with a quote from a friend of mine," he said, paraphrasing a line from his inspirational bard (whom he had met only once), Andrew Dice Clay. "Lorena, here's to you—sucking my dick."

The video, "John Wayne Bobbitt Uncut," had begun as an idle suggestion from Ron Jeremy, who had met Bobbitt at a Playboy party at the Wet 'n Wild theme park. At the time, Jeremy was directing a series of "girl-girl" videos and wondered if Bobbitt wanted to appear in one called "Nightmare on Lesbian Street." No sex, just a cameo appearance. That evening, Bobbitt's manager, Aaron Gordon, spoke to Jeremy. Yes, Bobbitt wanted to be in a porn film, but he wanted to be the star. The ex-marine—who said his plans for reënlistment had been foiled by defense cuts—wanted to tell the story of his "recovery" from what he liked to call "my battle wound." He wanted to show that, as he would put it later in his introductory narration to the film, "I was working."

His recovery was in fact not exactly documented by the subsequent footage. But that was of little concern. People wanted to gaze upon his recapitated dick; its abilities were secondary. If it didn't work, all the better. In many respects, Bobbitt is the cartoon illustration of all the conflict between "being" and "doing" that male porn actors face. He had wanted to star in the ultimate male action film, but the public was more interested in a passive corpse.

Understanding this, Leisure Time, the production company for the Bobbitt film, concentrated on controlling rights to the *still* shots of Bobbitt's penis. The cameraman, Jane Waters (who, despite the female professional name, is male), recalled, "It was all 'Now, it's your job the minute it comes out, whether it's hard or not, zoom in and stay on it till it's covered!' It was like this major world event."

Waters had plenty of time, because on the set Bobbitt could barely get it up, much less keep it there. Days of waiting and cajoling and hectoring passed, without results. Finally, the chauffeur of Leisure Time's president arrived one morning with an Igloo cooler. Inside was a syringe full of prostaglandin, a fatty acid that induces an erection when shot into the base of the penis. Bobbitt was, understandably, reluctant, but finally he followed the chauffeur back to the bathroom and the shot was administered. After twelve days, Bobbitt had received about

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five prostaglandin shots and produced an equivalent number of money shots.

A few months after his cinematic début, while Bobbitt was in Greensboro, North Carolina, signing autographs at Xanadu, a new porn boutique, he talked with Gordon about making another sex video. John has a plan, Gordon explained to me with a pained expression as Bobbitt listened. "John called me at midnight: 'I'm gonna get my penis extended and make another movie.' " Leisure Time's chief executive had introduced Bobbitt to a urologist who told him he could "make it three inches longer and one inch wider." It would cost six thousand dollars, but the surgeon was willing to waive the costs in exchange for publicity. Bobbitt interrupted his agent's account: "*Girls* do implants. Stronger, longer, harder. Like a hot rod. Like, take a Pinto and turn it into a hot rod." Gordon raised his eyebrows. (On October 11th, Bobbitt had the operation, which was, according to him, a great success. "It's like a beer can," he said from his recovery bed at his girlfriend's house in Las Vegas.)

Undeterred by his agent's skepticism that evening in Greensboro, Bobbitt continued: "My second video will be high quality, like Dr. Ruth's 'For Couples Only.' Help marriages and relationships. Create a stronger bond."

Gordon lifted a hand in a dismissive gesture. "He's crazy, because that's not going to happen," Gordon said. "Not instructional. It will be fantasy."

Bobbitt looked crestfallen. "Fantasy! Again?"

Gordon returned his client's whimper with a withering stare. "I've seen 'Uncut,' " he said. "You're in no position to *instruct*."

An hour later, four marines walked into the store. Bobbitt saw them coming and brightened. "Devil Dogs!" he pronounced. "You all combat?" None were. One was in "legal," two were "ammo techs," and the last one had actually just quit because he had found a better-paying job—working for United Parcel Service. The government, the former marine complained, "spends more on welfare than defending our country," and they all nodded. "There shouldn't be females on ships," he said. More nodding. "Women in the military, I'm totally against that," added another. The shorn heads bobbed, all in agreement.

During a break from signing, Bobbitt went next door to a topless bar. In the

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lobby, the manager asked Bobbitt if the club could have his autograph, signed on a butcher knife. Bobbitt took the knife and proceeded to demonstrate some "hand-to-hand-combat knife-fighting" moves he'd learned in the Marines. A large painting of a voluptuous woman hung on the opposite wall, and Bobbitt, as if drawn by a tow rope, crossed over to it and placed the knife against her throat. "If I wanted," he said, "I could tear her to pieces."

"CAL could build anything. Cal's the one who did this whole living room." Buck Adams turned and swept his hand across a vast empty expanse of white carpet and marble veneer. It was another porn house, down to the white couches, but on a grand scale, on the top of a hill overlooking the San Fernando Valley. Most of the rooms were empty, and some of the construction appeared unfinished, as if the contractor had abandoned the project three-quarters of the way through.

Buck Adams, a boxer turned porn actor, took me through his house, showing me Cal's handiwork. Cal loved to build, he said, and it was important to Cal to finish the job and finish it right. "Cal was a very responsible guy in a lot of ways," Adams said. "He was very normal. He had this very big view of how things should actually work. You know, you work hard every day, and in the end you will be rewarded. . . . But he was finding that just isn't true nowadays. Because if you work real hard, that doesn't mean you're going to be rewarded. It gets you a lousy stinking little paycheck, and that's that. That's where it ends."

Buck Adams has the exaggerated gestures and oversized voice of a country Texan, which he is, though one suspects that the home-on-the-range act may have been pumped up considerably since his arrival in Los Angeles. Adams's sister, the porn star Amber Lynn, pulled him into the business after neither boxing nor working as a bouncer seemed to be leading him anywhere. "For the first three to four years in the business, I was Mr. Wood," Buck Adams said, flexing a biceps. "No talk. Just a cowboy."

Several years ago, Adams started directing videos, bigger-budget numbers with car and helicopter chases; he became the king of action porn. By his own admission, he liked to "blow things up," on camera anyway, and his signature film formula became the car wreck followed by the wrecking of the sheets. But he was working on a very different kind of film now. It was the story of the porn star Savannah's suicide; she shot herself soon after an auto accident that scarred her face. "I don't even show the car wreck, which would've been a natural," he said. "I mean, I *lived* to do things like that." Somewhere in the last few months, he said, he had lost his appetite for cinematic explosions. He had, he said, almost lost his appetite for the business altogether. Cal's death had left him shaken, sobered. On this morning, he looked pale and drawn, the ride-'em-cowboy persona barely limping along. If he was more haunted than most by Cal's suicide, he had his reasons. He was the last to speak to Cal, moments before his death.

"The big problem with this business," Buck said, seated cross-legged on the floor of his living room, adrift in the open sea of carpet, "is there's less and less story." With the narrative gone, "looks is all there is to it. For the actors, it's really tough. They've taken away your one big justification for who and what you are: your work. And a whole bunch of things fall with that."

If the shift from performance to adornment has pushed many a porn actor to the cliff's edge, Adams said, then the gathering forces of polarization may push them over: into the yawning gap that has emerged between glossy-cable and cheap-video productions. "There's going to be two ends of the business," Buck Adams said. "Those who are doing 'The Project' and those who are doing the garbage . . . the haves and the have-nots." Already, he said, the have-nots, the bargain-basement video-makers with their high-eight cameras, are legion, and they have driven the profit margin down to near-extinction. Buck Adams called them "the flesh eaters." "One half of the industry is eating itself," he said, "eating each other's legs off." He demonstrated, waving his arms in frantic praying-mantis motions. "More, more sex, sex, sex, sex! And sell it for a dollar ninety-eight, and sell ten bazillion copies. And they actually 'release' them, like this *movie*. . . . It's heresy."

One of the ill effects of this have-and-have-not struggle has been a steep drop in the male actors' pay, which has plunged, even in the high end of the market (except for a very small number of stars), from eight hundred to six hundred to two hundred dollars a

"And, what's more, the jury was packed with ungulates."

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scene. Cal Jammer, in the last months of his life, watched his paychecks shrink. One of the last was for a hundred dollars. "Pretty soon," Buck Adams said, "you're going to have to pay to be in a porno movie."

Perhaps even more painful has been the psychological fall. "The actors that are in the high end are afraid of dropping out and having to deal with the flesh eaters." That was Cal's fear, Buck Adams said. "That's what was going on with Cal, that loss of fame." And in the days since Cal's death, Adams said, he's come to understand how that fear operates on him, too. "I just realized I'm a have who's panicking because I'm scared I might be a have-not. A couple days ago, I just realized it. And, oh God, is that why Cal killed himself?"

Buck saw how Cal felt endangered, saw his grip slipping, saw himself dangling above the pit of flesh eaters. He thought about how they had all "screwed with Cal" for his wood problems, about the many people on the set who had said, "Oh it's Cal, it's going to take two hours." "All of sudden, it really started to bug him. And I think that's pretty much what made him nutty, trying to find all these reasons. First it was this and then it was that." And after a while, Buck Adams said, Cal settled on a reason: Jill Kelly.

"Right at the end, I noticed it start to happen," Buck said. "He started to fixate all of the problems he had on 'Oh, that's why all this is happening, my wife's leaving me.'" Adams argued that such scapegoating was unfair and "stupid," but Cal remained firm in his conviction. Jill was starting to get work in the business, and Cal saw in the launch of her career the crash of his. Buck Adams may have inadvertently contributed to this impression. For his video "Snow Bunnies in Tahoe," to be shot in Big Bear, he had hired both Cal and Jill. Cal was excited about shooting on location and getting a chance to ski. But at the last minute Buck decided not to use Cal after all; it was a bit part, and Buck was trying to cut costs.

Two days before his death, Cal phoned Buck Adams. "Buck, I've got to come by right now," he said. Cal arrived, in a state. "Please," he said, "you've got to talk to me about this and keep it very quiet." Buck agreed. "I'm always waiting to hear some fantastic story," he said. "You never know, it may be my next movie." So he waited, expectantly. And Cal said, "I've got to kill my wife. I have figured it out. She is evil. She is purposely trying to screw me up." Buck tried to talk some sense into him. But Cal plowed on. "It's getting to be where it's her or me, Buck," he said. Buck told him, "Come on, Cal, you want to be 'Porn Star on Trial for Murder! Blah, blah, blah, buried his old lady in the back yard!'?" Buck paused. "And I kind of got him to the point where he was laughing about it, like 'Oh yeah, I guess I am going crazy.'"

Then Buck Adams sent him home.

THE Saturday before Cal's death, Jill left on a two-day trip to San Francisco, and from the moment she got off the plane her pager beeped incessantly, flashing Cal's number. When she called him back, that night, he was teary at first, then vengeful. When she asked if he was threatening her, first he said yes, then he said no, he was just going to kill himself. She pleaded with him not to think that way. Then, Jill recalled, "he said he had a gun." She put her hands to her face at the memory, her shoulders heaving. "But I didn't believe him."

The next day, Cal Jammer shot his last video, "Adult Affairs." It starred Nina Hartley as a conniving tabloid journalist who, as the video's producer and director, Mike Johansson, described it to me later, "hires boy toys to play with." Cal played her husband. He had a brief scene in which he seeks solace with another woman, then is caught in the act by his wife. "He had some wood problems," Johansson said. Cal kept apologizing for his slowness—it had taken twenty minutes "to get wood"—and told the producer that it was just because he was "having problems with Jill" and hadn't slept the night before, and that "the last few ones were solid, real solid. No problem. No problem." But Johansson had heard it all before. "Cal's heyday was done," he said. "He was known more often for having wood problems than not. He was not the constant woodsman anymore."

On Wednesday afternoon, Cal showed up at Ron Vogel's studio about four-thirty. "I'd asked him many times to finish up some sets," said Vogel, who was mystified by Cal's sudden sloth. "Working was his main goal," Vogel said, "just working, the love of working, using his creativity and energy to work. That was what was important to him." So Vogel was even more taken aback when Cal walked in that afternoon, "kind of briskly walked up to me and said, 'I don't feel good. I'm not going to work tonight.'" Vogel was on the phone, and before he could get off Cal walked out the door.

Cal's next stop was World Modeling. He sat in a chair opposite the agency's founder, Jim South. "He was a little teary-eyed," South recalled. "I knew that something was wrong, but I never assumed, because he never said anything." South asked if he was O.K. Cal looked at him and said, "I'm losing work because of her." Then he got up and left.

Cal's last stop was Trac Tech. He made a point of talking to everyone on the set. No one could figure out why he was there. "It was strange," Tyffany Million said, "because usually he was there because he had a reason to be there." Usually, he was there because there was work to be done. Then he got in his car and started driving to Jill's house. On the way, he picked up the car phone and dialled her number.

Cal told her he was on his way over, and she said she was about to leave and not to come. He said, she recalled, "If you don't wait for me, then you'll find me dead on your doorstep." In a panic, she called a porn actor and friend, Chuck Martino, and Martino called Buck Adams. While the two men were talking, Adams's line clicked, signalling another call. He put Martino on hold and picked up the other line. It was Cal. He was about a block down the street from Jill's, Buck later realized. "Why don't you tell me why I shouldn't do anything to my old lady," he said to Buck. "What I'm thinking is to go hurt her, and then hurt myself." Recounting the conversation, Buck paused and gave me a sharp look. "I mean, he wouldn't say 'kill,' wouldn't say 'kill' or 'suicide.' So that's why I didn't think it was that kind of a situation." After a beat or two, Buck went on. "And I said, 'I want to tell you something flat out front, Cal,' because I always tried to be real stiff and stern with Cal. And these are the words I will always regret saying, because

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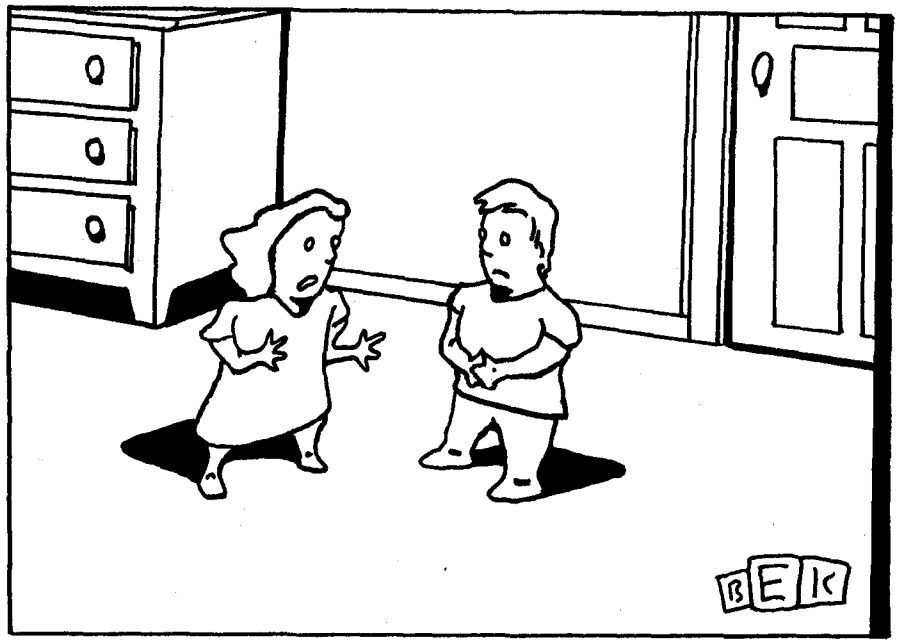

"And then, as soon as I had carved out my niche, they went and had another kid."

• •

Buck tried to play 'Buck Adams' in this situation. . . . I said, 'Cal, get this through your thick head. You don't have a right to go over and shoot your girlfriend. You don't have a right to go over and beat her up. You don't have a right to go hurt anybody. I mean, if you are so desperate to hurt somebody go out in the street and shoot yourself.' "

Buck Adams sucked in his breath and averted his eyes. There was a silence. Then, he said at last, he put Cal on hold and dialled Jill's number. He told her, "Whatever you do, drop the phone. Don't look. Just run out the door." Then he clicked back over to Cal, who said, "Thanks a lot, Buck. I really appreciate the advice." And hung up.

Soon afterward, Jill heard Cal's car pull up outside. Clutching a cordless phone, she ran upstairs and hid in the bathtub, pulling the curtain behind her. She heard the phone ring and ring, but the portable phone she was holding was not charged. After five minutes, she heard a loud pop and thought a window had broken. After a while, she crept downstairs, then out the door, then down the steps. At the foot of the steps, in the gutter, he was lying on his left side, his body slightly twisted. A light rain fell. Drainage water from up the street ran down the gutter and bathed his arms and face. Jill was sure it was a joke, just the kind of thing Cal would do to get attention. "Cal, get up," she said, with a nervous laugh. "Come on, Cal." Then she began to scream for help.

At the 1995 Adult Video News Awards, Michael Ninn's film "Sex" was the equivalent of "Forrest Gump" at the Oscars, nominated in sixteen categories and winning nine awards. The story is told in flashback by a sort of modern-day Ancient Mariner, a stooped service-station attendant who pumps gas at a godforsaken spot in the wind-whipped desert. As a young man of twenty, he pumped gas in the same place until he fell in love with a beautiful girl, played by Sunset Thomas. Then he went off to the city seeking a glamour job, because, he told her, "I'm just a guy who works out in a gas station out in the middle of nowhere. My fear is—my fear is you'll wake up one morning. You'll want more than I'll be able to offer you." He is recruited by a power-mad businesswoman, played by Tyffany Million, who molds her pretty boy into a supermodel. But the transformation wrecks him. "I'm on display like a goddam piece of art in a museum," he tells Million, and in the next scene he writhes in agony before the pulsating TV monitors that surround him. He nearly overdoses on sleeping pills, and eventually returns to the abandoned gas station, the fame and the girl gone. He was nothing, one of the characters testifies; just "a busted-up cowboy." He "had no power," the voice-over narration concludes. "This he found to be one of life's supreme truths."

Cal's funeral was at the Eternal Valley Memorial Park & Mortuary, a heavenly or a horrific name for a graveyard, depending on your view of spending eternity in the Valley. The chapel was jammed with men in sunglasses, weeping. The casket was open, which seemed ghoulish to some, given the way he had died. But it made a certain brutal sense: surely, if Cal could have asked for anything for his final appearance, it would have been to be viewed.

The minister knew nothing about Cal. He delivered a pro-forma sermon about "the person that he was," and how that person was "a very unique and special man," though how exactly was never articulated. Only two family members spoke, Cal's brother Brett and his mother. Jill was too shaken to talk and had someone else read her remarks.

Brett told the mourners that his brother was "very competitive" and "not a quitter." Cal's mother, Jackie Potes, said that Cal "was a performer since he was two years old. He always wanted to be a movie star. He wanted to buy me a Cadillac."

Afterward, we stood around on the steeply sloped lawn overlooking the wide valley. Ron Jeremy worked the crowd, urging everyone to watch him in an upcoming HBO movie. "It's a big thing," he said, "with O.J.'s girlfriend." The male talent stood in small, tight groups, and the talk was mostly of men broken by women. There were mutterings about how the industry should "boycott" Jill Kelly.

A producer who had worked with Cal stood in the back during the funeral and watched all the sobbing men with a dry and dubious eye. He had seen how the male actors cut each other's throats every day to get a job. "The comrades-in-arms thing just isn't there," he said. Out on the lawn, one of the men approached the producer. "He said, 'It's a shame, isn't it?' And I said, 'Yes, it's a tragedy.' And he said, 'He could be any of us.' " And the producer said he'd thought, So that's what this is all about. Already, Cal had been forgotten. "It's all past," he said. "A year from now, people will bring

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up his stage name, and it will be 'Cal who?' "

Cal's mother said to me that the day her son died he had left a message on her answering machine saying, "My wife is ruining my life." Jackie Potes didn't know if that was true, but she knew one thing. "He wasn't a woman," she said, "and, you know, women are the thing. They don't sell men. They sell women."

ONE early afternoon a couple of months after Cal's death, I was sitting in the main room of World Modeling when a tall young blond man in a black wide-brimmed rancher's hat, an Australian-outback coat, and cowboy boots walked in. Brad, the "talent coördinator," told him to take a seat. The stranger asked me not to identify him except by his trucker's handle, Cowboy.

He was from Wisconsin, and he was trying to get out of trucking and farmwork, he told Brad. Actually, he would tell me later, he was trying to save himself from bankruptcy court: he and a friend had unsuccessfully tried to start a trucking company in Wisconsin, and now creditors were in pursuit.

Brad gave him the usual discouraging new-guy speech. "This business is very, very tough," he said. "There are maybe fifteen guys total who make a very good living." Directors don't like new male talent, he said. The starting pay would probably be only a hundred to a hundred and fifty a scene, he said. A new actor would probably have to begin with gang bangs, he said. Cowboy took it all in, nodding, but said he still wanted to give it a try. Brad sent him to a back room with some pornographic magazines. When he was hard, just call out, Brad said, and they'd take some Polaroid shots.

Later, sitting on a couch in a side office, Cowboy told me it had taken him a long time, because he was nervous, and then, when he was finally ready, he had called out, over and over, but no one had heard him. "Finally, Brad came back," he said, looking at his boots, mortified.

Cowboy was raised in farm country near Madison. He didn't get along with his father, who owned a small farm-equipment business, and so from the time he was twelve or thirteen he lived on a friend's farm and worked as a hired hand, haying, milking, building fences. That work has vanished now, he said. "The banks own more of the farms than the farmers do," he said. "Years ago, it was nothing to walk onto a farm and say 'What do you need?' and go to work. That money is not there anymore."

So he came out to Los Angeles, looking for modelling jobs, escorting, porn, anything to pay back his debt. But the escort services he tried said they didn't want men or weren't hiring. And now World Modeling wasn't exactly encouraging. "It's a lot easier in this business to get in as a female," he said. "Guys are a dime a dozen—and we pretty much put ourselves in that predicament." I asked him what he meant by that. "Because we've always kept women in back, held them down." Women found work displaying their bodies, he said, because it was all they could get—and the fact that women weren't part of the male workplace only helped make commercial feminine display more profitable. "Guys want to see what they can't see usually. They will pay more to see what's hidden." But now the male workplace was collapsing, and the employment realm that was prospering was female-dominated. "If you look back through history," he pointed out, "entertainment was always the thing that flourished during a depression—to take people's minds off how bad things are."

What would take Cowboy's mind off his troubles I didn't know. But, for now, Los Angeles held no promise. He was flying back to Wisconsin that evening, he said, returning his rancher's hat to his head, and he would figure it out, or not, from there.

WHEN Cal's former girlfriend Cameo heard that Cal had committed suicide, she couldn't believe it. "When I think of Cal, I think of somebody who was very, very ambitious. . . . And I never, ever thought he would be the kind of person who would kill himself. It's like Savannah. We never thought she would kill herself. They both seemed to care about themselves too much." But then she had an awful thought: Savannah had made the headlines in mainstream America when she died—the Los Angeles *Times*, *Rolling Stone*, tabloid TV. "I wonder if Savannah reached such a high level of fame after her suicide that he thought that was the way to do it," Cameo said. Maybe, if he put a gun to his head, he'd be someone, too.

But maybe even more awful was the fact that in Cal's case not even a violent death merited public attention. In the weeks after his suicide, Cameo watched "A Current Affair" to see if his name appeared on the tabloid show, because, she suspected, "that's probably what he wanted." But Cal's demise was never noted outside the porn world. "There was no writeup. None. None."

Soon after Cal's death, Jill Kelly was offered money for a photo layout to accompany an article about Cal in a porn magazine, because his suicide was "hot right now." Jill was going to take the job and turn the check over to Cal's family to help pay the funeral expenses. But then, she said, she thought better of it. "It wouldn't look right." And, besides, she was booked solid for the next month with work. She didn't need the job. ♦

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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

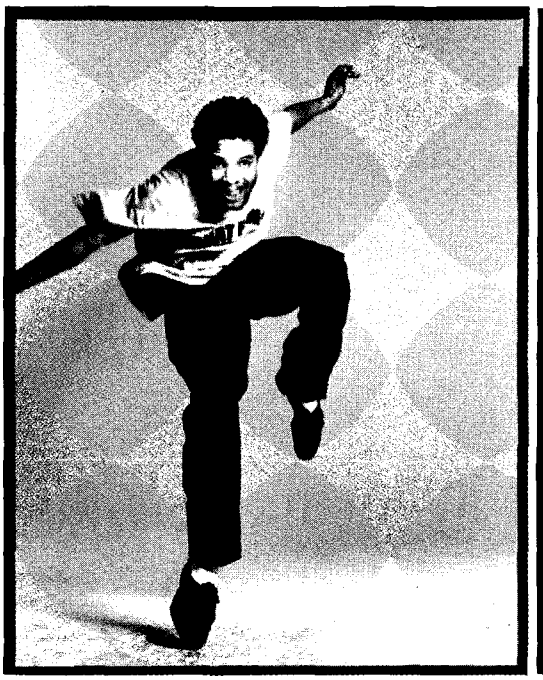
KING TAP

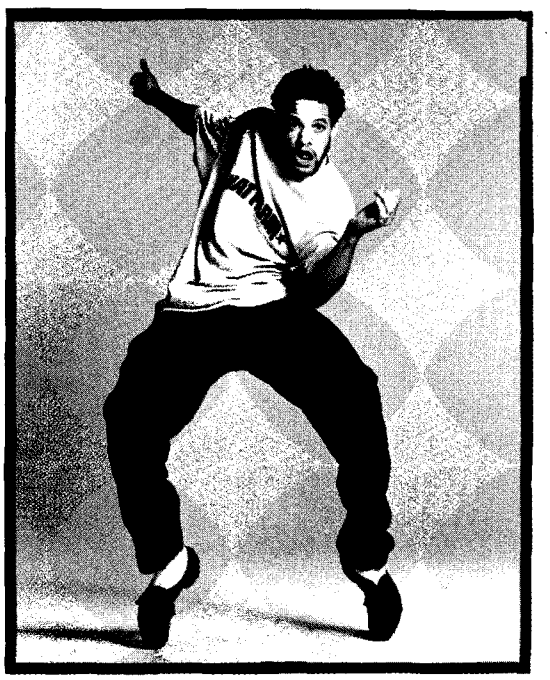
Savion Glover moves a tradition into the future.

BY JOHN LAHR

On a balmy September night in 1994, at the end of a thrilling gig, the tap dancer Savion Glover, then twenty years old, and wearing an old T-shirt and a new growth of beard, leaped into the moat that was part of the set left over from the Shakespeare Festival's production of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" at the Delacorte Theatre, in Central Park. Glover's impetuous cannonball instantly earned him a place in the annals of theatrical joy. He was soon joined by the two street drummers known as Drummin' 2 Deep, who had accompanied him on plastic containers during his show, and by Real Tap Skills, a group of young tap dancers he'd been training for the last few years. The finale, which brought the audience to its feet, was, like everything Glover did that night, an encounter with the extraordinary. Glover was splashing down to earth after two hours in musical orbit.

Tap dancing is an explosion of spirit. Although it can be recorded, filmed, and even written about, the real glory of the art is the exhibition of mastery in the living moment. And those who bore witness to Glover that night saw an old art form taking a new direction. Glover hardly looked at the audience or faced them as he tapped. There was no toothy smile, no waving of arms, no tuxedo (although he owns one). Glover, in fact, made no concessions to conventional entertainment. He was a picture of dishevelled command—not out to please but to find himself inside the beat. "These are our expressions," Glover told me about his hard-core style of tap, when I met him a few weeks ago. "People have to come into our circle. Of course we're entertaining, but on *our* terms." Lurching forward in his baggy shorts, as if following the lead of his size 11½ EE feet in a fugue of taps, Glover was in his own ecstatic zone—"reachin' for the rhythm," as





PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

Savion Glover, New York City, September 27, 1995.

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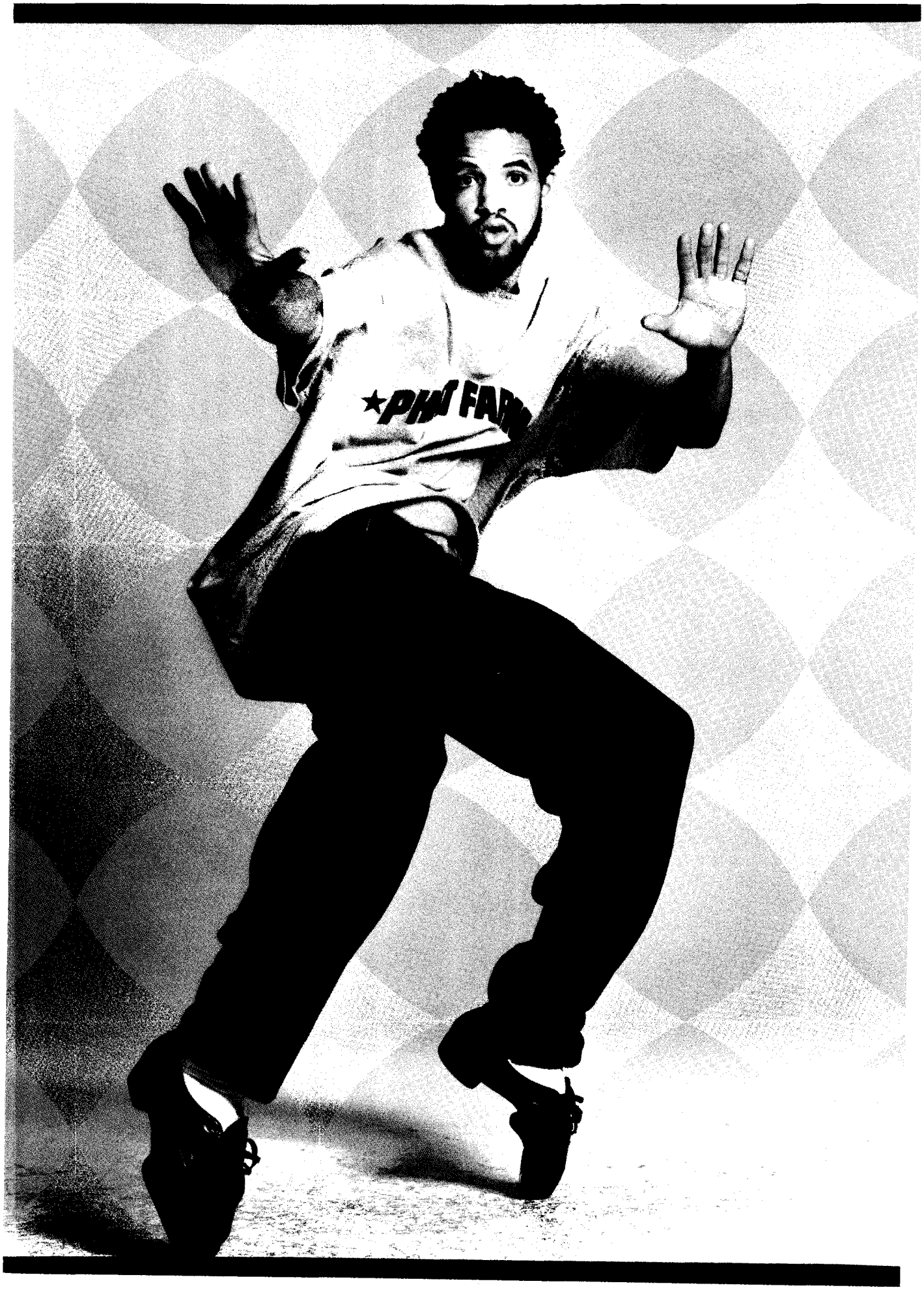

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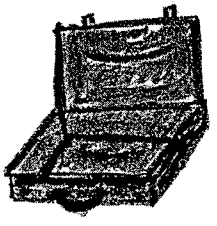
he put it. "I'm not thinking about where I am on the stage, about what my arms are doing. I'm just listenin' to the music." He calls it "goin' for self" when he finds a groove. "I'm hearin' big bands and stuff," he said. "I'm hearing orchestrations—drums, horns, bass. I'm not thinking about the audience. I'm not even thinking that I have tap shoes on. My toes are my sounds. I treat them like instruments. All types of music going." But it's the hip-hop rhythms that Glover's virtuosity is most notably taking off the street and onto the American stage. His kinetic language has all the vibrancy of street talk, which is what he compares it to: "See, it's like we have English, right? English, French, Spanish—and then we got slang. The steps that we usin' now is like slang. There ain't even no name. We can't say 'shuffle step' or 'flap' or something like that. It's just like *vrap-um-ba-boom.*"

Tap has always been a ceremony of survival, and Glover's dance is a brilliant assertion of the anger, energy, intensity, and arrogance of African-American youth. One of the people who saw Glover that September night—and whose cultural foundation had picked up the tab for the evening—was Herb Alpert, a musician and the co-founder of A & M records, which, before its sale to Polygram, was the largest independent label in the world. Alpert, who is no slouch at talent spotting, had first encountered Glover in George C. Wolfe's "Jelly's Last Jam," in 1992, when the eighteen-year-old dancer raised the roof tapping with his mentor and friend Gregory Hines. "He has the whole tool kit, the whole shot from bebop to hip-hop," Alpert says of Glover's complex sound. "Man, he's like his own rhythm section." As Glover and his crew clambered out of the makeshift canal, gleefully shaking the water off themselves like puppies, Alpert turned to Margo Lion, who had commissioned and co-produced "Jelly's Last Jam" and was sitting beside him. "Savion is to tap what Charlie Parker is to jazz," he said.



ONCE upon a time, when the Broadway musical was young, it took its defining, irresistible energy from the streets of the city. At a stroke, Glover's Park performance brought musical theatre up to date; his upbeat energy showed how the musical might find its way out of decadence and back to dynamism. "My style is just raw," Glover says. "My style is young. Funk." If he is pressed for a definition of "funk," the chin of his boyish face drops down toward his chest, and his head slowly eases its way from side to side. "Funk is real *under*," he says, snapping his fingers. "Against the beat. Just *ridin'*. It's the bass line. It's like a pulse. It's dead, but it's right there." Recently, when Wolfe was trying to conceive a project for Glover at the Public Theatre, and asked him what he wanted to do, Glover replied, "I just want to bring in the noise. I just want to bring in the funk." In this way he gave Wolfe the title and the trajectory of the show they're doing together, which opens for previews on November 3rd. Words are not Glover's main medium, but in those simple sentences he sounded the call of his dance revolution: to put tap back into a contemporary black context. In the show's subtitle, Wolfe spelled out the mission behind Glover's dancing and expressed his own anthropological fascination with rhythm, calling it, in full, "Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk: A Tap/Rap Discourse on the Staying Power of the Beat." To Wolfe, tap is a metaphor for all that's buried inside rhythm. The show, in a series of musical tableaux, decodes black rhythms as they move from Africa to slavery in the South, then to urban communities, and, finally, to the present. "My theory is that what's buried inside rhythm is whatever the historical, cultural, political, and spiritual truths of the day are," Wolfe says. "So, if you really dissect, say, ragtime, there's a complexity, but there's an innocence and joy, too, because a country had just asserted itself as a world power." He adds, "Inside Savion are the rhythms of all this."

As Glover waited for rehearsal to begin on a recent weekend, swigging from a pint of Nestea, he hardly looked like an encyclopedia of the beat. When he is not on the floor working on his steps, he radiates a calm, gentle naturalness. In a blue Shaq 32 shirt, with a black balaclava that he has contrived to wear on the top of his head so that his hair pokes through the opening where the face should be, he could be any other unprepossessing homeboy. In fact he's a prodigy. "Savion is possibly the best tap dancer that ever lived," Gregory Hines says. And Glover's wiry body has become the repository of an extraordinary tap legacy. "I call him the Sponge. He learns very quickly," says the tap choreographer Henry Le Tang, who taught the Hines brothers in the fifties and taught Glover for about a year before putting him in "Black and Blue," a tap revue he first mounted in Paris in 1987. Along with Le Tang and Hines, Glover's teachers have included Jimmy Slyde, Chuck Green, Lon Chaney, Honi Coles, Sammy Davis, Jr., James (Buster) Brown, and Arthur Duncan: they have been passing their steps along to him since he went public with his big talent, at the age of eleven, on Broadway, in "The Tap Dance Kid." Then, at fifteen, Glover played opposite Hines and Sammy Davis in the film "Tap," where he was cast in the role of tap dancing's heir apparent. By next month, when he turns twenty-two, myth will have become reality: Glover, the future of tap, has arrived.

"GOD'S hand was on him," said Yvette Glover, Savion's mother, when I asked her about her son's gift recently. But the family gene pool also had something to do with it. Glover has a raffish athletic and musical pedigree. One of his great-grandfathers on his mother's side, Dick (King Richard) Lundy, was a shortstop and a manager in the Negro Leagues. Glover's grandfather Bill Lewis was a big-band piano player and vocalist, and his grandmother Anna Lundy Lewis, who is now seventy-nine, was for many years the minister of music at the New Point Baptist Church in Newark; she sometimes played for Whitney Houston when she was singing gospel. And Yvette Glover herself is a professional singer and actress, who will appear at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in November, in "The Whispers of Angels." It was his grandmother who first noticed Glover's musicality, when he was a fretful baby and she tried to calm him by picking him up and humming to him. "Savion looked up at her, smiling, and he started humming," Yvette Glover recalls. "She and I looked at each other. She said to me, 'This baby's anointed. There is no doubt. He's anointed.' " By the age of two, Savion was leaving a trail of fingerprints around the house as he beat out rhythms on everything he touched. "Walls, pots, closet doors," says Glover, of playing with his two older brothers, Carlton and Abron. "We'd get different sounds out of everything." When Yvette Glover came home from a job she had as an administrative secretary, Savion would say, "Mommy, sit down

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RIVERSIDE PARK

I've always loved the autumn. Trees bleed amber,
the sun moves south to sink into the river.
For several of these seasons you were here—
if not precisely this noon, bench, or air,
still in New York, October, and inside
my heart. Our timing's trick
was elegantly simple: although sick,
you had not yet died.

How could I resist the chance to share
(shyly at first; more freely the last year)
fusses, ideas, encounters, daily weather?
So for a space we took life in together
reciprocally, since what came your way
you passed along to me.
Experience doubled and then halved kept giving
itself to both as long as both were living.

I pause to watch the afternoon's red ray
advance another notch. Across the way
a mother tends her toddler, and a pair
of strolling lovers vanish in the glare
flung from the river by the westering sun.
I can hardly claim to be alone.
Nevertheless, of all whom autumn's new
russet brocades are draping, none is you.

—RACHEL HADAS

and collapse yourself," and then he and his brothers, who had been organized by their grandmother, would give a musical performance. His mother says he had "scary rhythm," by which she says she means "unusual, impeccable rhythm." When Savion was about four and a half, she put him in a Suzuki drumming class, only to be greeted one day, soon after his enrollment, by his teacher, with the words "Savion has got to go." As Yvette Glover recalls it, "I said, 'Excuse me?' She said, 'He's got to go.' I said, 'Oh, my God, what did he do?' She said, 'No, he doesn't belong. He is too far advanced for this class.' " The teacher had arranged an audition at the Newark Community School of the Arts, and it resulted in Savion's becoming the youngest recipient of a scholarship in the school's history.

When Glover was seven, he began to learn show tap at the Broadway Dance Center, here in New York. Thereafter, Yvette Glover carted him into the city from Newark every weekend to music and dance classes, along with his brothers. At the age of eight, he saw Chuck Green and Lon Chaney's exhibition of rhythm tap—a form of tap in which the whole foot, not just the heel and toe, is used to make sound. "Savion loved the fact that it was the foot, the whole foot, that could be used to make those African drummed rhythms, those in-depth sounds," says Yvette Glover. She remembers Savion (his name was her version of "saviour") turning to her after Green and Chaney's performance and saying, "Mommy, this is what I want to do." She adds, "Once he hit the floor to get up in the morning, what you'd hear was tapping. He would tap in the bathroom. When he walked to school, he tapped."

Since he turned his tapping into a profession, twelve years ago, Glover has earned a nice living, doing shows, films, and special engagements like his five-year stint on "Sesame Street." When he was nineteen, he bought a four-bedroom house for his mother in Upper Montclair, New Jersey, and he occupies a large, wood-panelled basement apartment there, where he has his own recording equipment and a portable dance floor. (Glover enjoys mixing music tracks himself.) Since "Jelly's Last Jam," he has been dating the singer Tiffany Caldwell. His other major social activity is basketball, about which his agent, Carole Davis, says "he's a freak."

"I always wanted to dunk," says Glover, who did one of his first choreographed dances with a basketball in hand. "Basketball is like my exercise. I can't get away from basketball. My brother Abron was like mad into basketball. Abron could just—one bounce off the verti—just woof it. I'm woofin' with my feet."

NOT long ago, Glover wrote a rap about tap dancing, invoking Chaney, who died last year (and taught him, among many steps, the paddle-and-roll), and Jimmy Slyde, whom he considers to be "the godfather" of tap:

I do a wing on the left
Paddle my roll real loud—
Then get funky like that bass line
From "Move That Crowd."
When I slide like Jimmy
You can't stop my taps
'Cause they comin' from tha feet
Of tha Dancin' Maniac.

Tap is a folk art, and Glover's joyful improvisations always carry a sense of the past. A few years ago, at the memorial service for Honi Coles, Glover did an a-cappella tap, ending with a flash move that Coles loved but which Glover rarely does: a back flip from a standing position. "A lot of times, he'll do somebody's step," Hines says. "I know whose step it is. He'll do it, and he'll work it into his thing. It's like an homage—a real playful, respectful thing." Glover feels this historical imperative strongly. "I feel like it's one of my responsibilities to keep the dance alive, to keep it out there, to keep the style," he says. This is why Glover set up Real Tap Skills, why he taught classes in all sixty-five cities he visited last year on the road tour of "Jelly's Last Jam," and why he's planning to start a school to encourage young tappers. His mission is to reclaim the beat that was muted when tap dancing was recycled—first on Broadway, where it was brought downtown from Harlem, with Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake's 1921 musical, "Shuffle Along," and then in the Hollywood fun machine. "The dance just got lost," he says. "It started to be this entertainment-type thing. Instead of keeping it real, people started mixing tap with jazz dance. They would shy away from the rhythms—all the turns, the big swings of your body." He adds, "Tap

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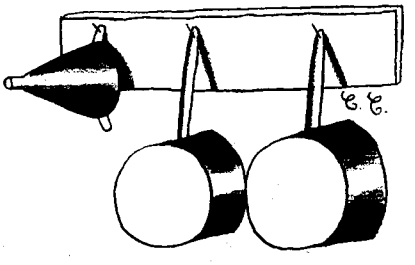
dancing really has nothing to do with arms or big smiles or anything like that." Glover's dance brings tap back to where it originally lived: below the waist. "He wants the blackness, the roughness, the rhythm of the black tappers to be heard," says Yvette Glover. "He wants it to be a credit to all of those people who died penniless, who never had a chance to expand their gifts. He wants the recognition of where tap dancing came from; he wants to honor that authentic, African-rooted sound."

In many states in the pre-Civil War South, slaves were forbidden to have drums, because their owners feared that drumming would somehow incite revolt. Inevitably, percussion was displaced to the feet, and part of tap's mystery and power—what Zora Neale Hurston called the "dynamic suggestion" in black dance—is the connection of the tap beat to that subversive liberation. Many hoofers have played the drums—Harold Nicholas, Gregory Hines, Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, even Fred Astaire—and it's no surprise that Glover, too, went from the drums to tap. "Tap is like a drum solo," Glover says. "I believe you can get so many tones out of using your foot. Your heel is like your bass drum. The ball of your foot is the snare. The side is like a rim shot. A regular tap dancer knows ball and heel; he don't know about the side of your arch, the side of your foot. We get sounds from the pinkie toe to all sides of the foot, back to the heel. I try to get these stupid wings—" He stops, stands up, and demonstrates a wing, rapidly sliding his feet apart and making a graceful swishing sound. "It's like brushes," he explains, adding, "Drummers carry around their sticks; we carry around our tap shoes."

Glover has what is called in the trade "a heavy foot." He says, "I dance heavy. Loud. And I just wanna be heard, all over the place." Lately, in discussions with Wolfe about hiring extra dancers to fill out the different tap styles to be represented in the show, Glover is often heard to say, "He can't hit." "Hitting" is tap talk for expressiveness—what in the old days was called "laying down some iron." If a dancer can hit, in Glover's terms, he's "somebody who can complete a phrase, complete a tap sentence . . . *say* something." Somebody like Tommy Tune, in Glover's opinion, is a dancer who can't hit. "He is like sensationalism. He don't express himself," Glover says. "He hasn't reached the point. Tune and all those guys are still doing classroom stuff. That's why tap dancing don't go nowhere. It'll probably go somewhere now we got young hands in here. All these years they been teachin' the same thing—shuffle, cramp roll, flap. They give you like a vocabulary—maxi pullback, buck-and-wing, maxi ford. But they don't tell you *shaff-da-boom*. . . . My teachers are still the old hands like Jimmy Slyde. He told me, 'Yo, hit.' " Glover sometimes becomes philosophical on the subject of hitting, his feet rippling the floor with taps as he speaks. "Execute a rhythm to the fullest. If you gonna come up here and do somethin' that you learned in class or that a teacher told you, that's cool and everything, but I wanna see what *you* got. I wanna see *you* hit. The complete expression of you in the moment. No restrictions. How you feel. How you hear the rhythms."

Just how hard Glover hits has been captured on a new record, "Battle of the Bands: San Antonio vs. New Orleans" (Riverwalk Live, Volume 4). The producers staged a kind of imaginary challenge between a tapper and a hoofer: Bill (Bojangles) Robinson singing and tapping to "Doin' the New Low Down" against Glover tapping to the same song. The contest lasts almost two minutes. Robinson, who was known as the "Mayor of Harlem" and was probably the most popular tapper of his day (when he died, a hundred-car funeral cortège attracted more than a million people along the route), produces his crisp, syncopated sound with his heel and toe. But Glover is a dynamo, tripling the number of taps in each musical phrase as his feet dissect the song into a barrage of intricate rhythms.

THE challenge of improvisation is the centerpiece of tap. "The toughest thing for any tap dancer is to get out there and improvise," Hines says. "Not only do you have to make it up, you've got to do something that tops the previous dancer. The challenge is a rite of passage. It's also one of the ways we kept the art form moving." Often the challenges are real, as they were between Hines and Glover in "Jelly's Last Jam." "It's frightening to be in a dance challenge with Savion," Hines says. "Winning was never in question. For me, the only thing in question was whether I could get one in on him. Savion liked to play basketball between shows. Meanwhile, I'm getting massages, taking naps." Hines took to knocking on Glover's dressing-room door and asking, "Are you tired?" He recalls a Saturday matinée when he found out that Glover had been out all night partying. Hines was sure he had the advantage this time; he thought, "This time I'll really nail him." He continues, "When he came back for the evening show, he was exhausted. So we get out on the stage, and we're doing it, but I can see he's not a hundred per cent. I do my first step then he does a step. I pull something out, and I riff on it, so that even the people onstage are going, 'Ooh, ooh.' So now he blinks a couple of times, like a rhino that hadn't seen me and now he's spotted me. Now he reaches for something very interesting. But it's still not, you know, there. I finish off. I spin. I go up on both my toes, and I just stay there, and I come down with a flourish. And now I can see his nostrils flaring and his eyebrows wrinkling. His lips come pouting out like they do, and he does an amazing step—he spins around, goes up on *one* toe, and then he hops on the toe to some kind of percussive thing that pissed me off. And when he did that a roar went up like it was a bullfight. The people onstage started laughing, because they knew I thought I had him."



As Glover takes the members of Real Tap Skills through the steps in rehearsals for "Bring In 'Da Noise," he improvises as he goes, and he frequently stops the dancers and corrects them, saying, "Hear the beat?" Glover can translate the music's rhythms directly to his feet—and if he forgets a step he has only to play back a tape of the rhythms to recall it. "I just hear songs. Just like solos," he says during the break. "Like that just now—" He stops and listens. Behind us is the clatter of tapping, but Glover's ears have picked up the lighter sound of someone tapping a cup. He goes on, "I hear music in the street. When the cars are screechin'. Trains, subways, people talkin', basketballs, motorcycles—all types of sounds." Glover's obsessive search for rhythms is what gives his dancing its distinctive intensity. "People think I dance angry," he says. "But I'm reachin' for a different tone."

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Wolfe describes Glover's extraordinary perceptiveness by saying, "It's like all of a sudden someone figured out how to make the clarinet have twenty more notes. You go, 'Where did that come from?' "

Glover doesn't know, and he doesn't worry about it. "When I choreograph I like to make it up right there on the spot," he says. (In 1992, he received a National Endowment for the Arts grant in choreography, and so became the youngest recipient in N.E.A. history.) "He's completely available to the moment," Wolfe says. "Therefore, in the rehearsal room anything can happen, as opposed to actors' trying to cover themselves or to protect what they don't know."

Today, Glover has started slowly. He's struggling with Wolfe's concept of layering Reg E. Gaines's rap and Ann Duquesnay's bluesy voice over his taps to convey the controlled violence of a summer day in the late sixties. "Hot fun in the summertime," Duquesnay wails, and underneath her voice Gaines is saying, "Cats hangin on corner / Sippin grapeless wine / Late wit' my pay, and my rent due (too) / Hydrant streamin' / Blacktop steamin' . . ." Wolfe keeps an eye on Glover, who works the dancers around the floor, trying to find the movements to narrate the sudden flare-up of a street fight. "Now he's starting to get it," Wolfe whispers. "I direct the same way. I know it inside, and I just have to clear myself out of the way, and then it comes out. He's got all these rhythms that are just in him. He's working on it, but it's all— It's genius is what it is. You have to tap into it, and it comes out. He's as much a composer as he is a choreographer."

Glover paces and taps in front of the mirror, hearing phrases, repeating them, building up a tapestry of intricate sound, which sometimes frustrates the dancers of Real Tap Skills, who struggle to keep up with him. "Let's go again," he says, and they stolidly assume their positions and start over. Watching them work makes you think of a brass rubbing: each new pass brings the outline into slightly higher definition. Musical ideas flow as easily as moods through Glover's body. As he lurches and slides—sometimes on point, sometimes spinning on his heels—he sends out volleys of clattering rhythm, and seems to be playing the floor.

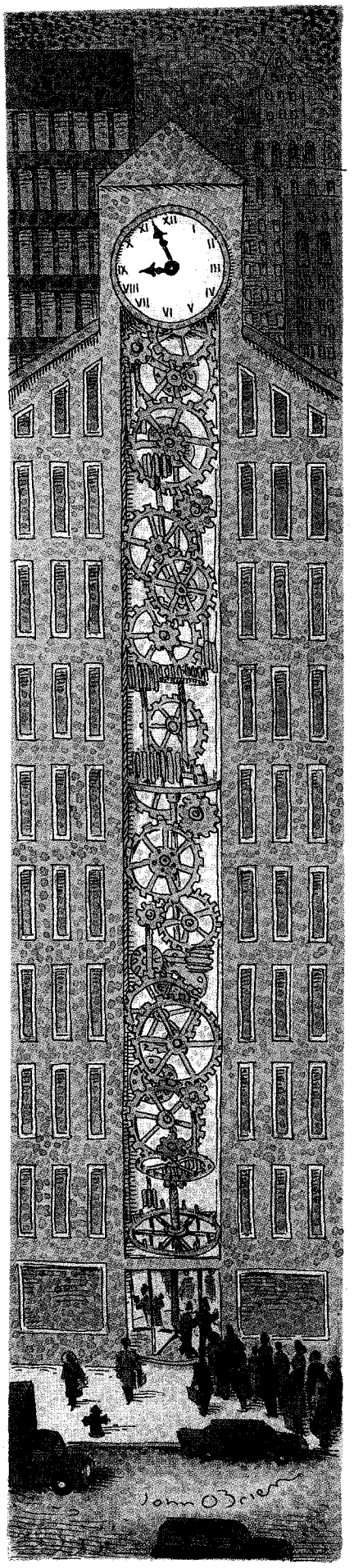
"I'm feelin' the stage for sounds," Glover says of his rehearsal method. "You might find a spot on it that gives you that bass; you might find a spot on the floor that gives you that dead-type tom-tom sound." On this particular day, he finds a spot and hits it with the side of his ankle. He likes the sound and the look of it. Over the next three hours, he works this sound up into an elaborate rhythmic geometry. In fact, watching Glover build and orchestrate the complex weave of rhythms is like watching a mathematician set up an equation and factor it out. At the beginning of the morning, there was no scene; by the three-o'clock lunch break, Glover and his group have got four sensational minutes. Wolfe laughs, his body rocking to the beat, as the dancers go through their noisy, brilliant paces for him. "It's all right," Wolfe says afterward, his eyes shining. Later, out of Glover's earshot, he adds, "I think what makes Savion an incredible artist is his extraordinary joy in what he does. He is able to live inside that state of joy and not compromise his emotional complexity the way the earlier tap dancers had to."

NOT long ago, Yvette Glover, watching her son preview some of the new routines for "Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk," had a strange experience. "I sat there and I actually saw my son—I'm not crazy—emerge from his body," she says. "Like I said, 'There goes my baby.' When he hit that floor, I just saw this Savion, the old Savion, stay there, and then a transformation take place. . . . I could not believe what I was seeing."

In the tap world, Glover's emergence as a role model is there for all to see. "When I was fifteen, I looked up to Honi Coles, Sammy Davis, and Sandman Sims," Hines says. "A fifteen-year-old kid now is trying to do Savion. So five years from now what we'll be getting is a whole new wave of tap dancers who are in their early twenties, led by Savion, who at that point will be in his mid- to late twenties. It will be a pool to draw from for serious tap choreographers like we've never seen."

Glover seems unfazed by his responsibility and his new adulthood, assuming both with a cool, disarming command. Last year, before he set off on the national tour of "Jelly's Last Jam," he stood with his mother in the kitchen of their New Jersey house. "I actually said goodbye," Yvette Glover says. "He will always be my baby, but I realize that he's a young man. It was hard to see him go. I said, 'Lord, what am I gonna do? There goes my last child.' "

"Mommy," Glover said. "You raised me right. Now trust me." ♦



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FICTION

THE PIANO TUNER'S WIVES

BY WILLIAM TREVOR

VIOLET married the piano tuner when he was a young man; Belle married him when he was old.

There was a little more to it than that, because in choosing Violet to be his wife the piano tuner had rejected Belle, which was something everyone remembered when the second wedding was announced. "Well, she got the ruins of him anyway," a farmer of the neighborhood remarked, speaking without vindictiveness, stating a fact as he saw it. Others saw it similarly, though most of them would have put the matter differently.

The piano tuner's hair was white, and one of his knees became more arthritic with each damp winter that passed. He had once been svelte but was no longer so, and he was blinder than on the day he married Violet—a Thursday in 1951, June 7th. The shadows he lived among now had less shape and less density than those of 1951.

"I will," he responded in the small Protestant church of St. Colman, standing almost exactly as he had stood on that other afternoon. And Belle, in her fifty-ninth year, repeated the words her onetime rival had spoken before this altar also. A decent interval had elapsed; no one in the church considered that the memory of Violet had not been honored, that her passing had not been distressfully mourned. "And with all my earthly goods I thee endow," the piano tuner stated, while his new wife thought she would like to be standing beside him in white instead of suitable wine-red. She had not attended the first wedding, although she had been invited. She'd kept herself occupied that day, whitewashing the chicken shed, but even so she'd wept. And tears or not, she was more beautiful—and younger by almost five years—than the bride who so vividly occupied her thoughts as she battled with her jealousy. Yet he had preferred Violet—or the prospect of the house that would one day become hers, Belle told herself bitterly in the chicken shed, and the little bit of money there was, an easement in a blind man's existence. How understandable, she was reminded later on, whenever she saw Violet guiding him as they walked, whenever she thought of Violet making everything work for him, giving him a life. Well, so could she have.

As they left the church the music was by Bach, the organ played by someone else today, for usually it was his task. Groups formed in the small graveyard that was scattered around the small gray building, where the piano tuner's father and mother were buried, with ancestors on his father's side from previous generations. There would be tea and a few drinks for any of the wedding guests who cared to make the journey to the house, two miles away, but some said goodbye now, wishing the pair happiness. The piano tuner shook hands that were familiar to him, seeing in his mental eye faces that his first wife had described for him. It was the depth of summer, as in 1951, the sun warm on his forehead and his cheeks, and on his body through the heavy wedding clothes. All his life he had known this graveyard, had first felt the letters on the stones as a child, spelling out to his mother the names of his father's family. He and Violet had not had children themselves, though they'd have liked to. He was her child, it had been said, a statement that was an irritation for Belle whenever she heard it. She would have given him children, of that she felt certain.

"I'm due to visit you next month," the old bridegroom reminded a woman whose hand still lay in his, the owner of a Steinway, the only one among all the pianos he tuned. She played it beautifully. He asked her to whenever he tuned it, assuring her that to hear was fee enough. But she always insisted on paying what was owing.

"Monday the third I think it is."

"Yes, it is, Julia."

She called him Mr. Dromgould. He had a way about him that did not encourage familiarity in others. Often when people spoke of him he was referred to as the piano tuner, this reminder of his profession reflecting the respect accorded to the possessor of a gift. Owen Francis Dromgould his full name was.

"Well, we had a good day for it," the new, young clergyman of the parish remarked. "They said maybe showers but sure they got it wrong."

"The sky?"

"Oh, cloudless, Mr. Dromgould, cloudless."

"Well, that's nice. And you'll come on over to the house, I hope?"

"He must, of course," Belle pressed, then hurried through the gathering in the graveyard to reiterate the invitation, for she was determined to have a party.

SOME time later, when the new marriage had settled into a routine, people wondered if the piano tuner would begin to think about retiring. With a bad knee, and being sightless in old age, he would readily have been forgiven in the houses and the convents and the school halls where he applied his skill. Leisure was his due, the good fortune of company as his years slipped by, no more than he deserved. But when, occasionally, this was put to him by the loquacious or the inquisitive he denied that anything of the kind was in his thoughts, that he considered only the visitation of death as bringing any kind of end. The truth was, he would be lost without his work, without his travelling about, his arrival every six months or so in one of the small towns to which he had offered his services for so long. No, no, he promised, they'd still see the white Vauxhall turning in at a farm gate or parked for half an hour in a convent play yard, or drawn up on a verge while he ate his lunchtime sandwiches, his tea poured out of a thermos by his wife.

It was Violet who had brought most of this activity about. When they married he was still living with his mother in the gate lodge of Barnagorm House. He had begun to tune pianos—the two

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in Barnagorm House, another in the town of Barnagorm, and one in a farmhouse he walked to four miles away. In those days he was a charity because he was blind, was now and again asked to repair the sea-grass seats of stools or chairs, which was an ability he had acquired, or to play at some function or other the violin his mother had bought him in his childhood. But when Violet married him she changed his life. She moved into the gate lodge, she and his mother not always agreeing but managing nonetheless. She possessed a car, which meant she could drive him to wherever she discovered a piano, usually long neglected. She drove to houses as far away as forty miles. She fixed his charges, taking the consumption of petrol and wear and tear to the car into account. Efficiently, she kept an address book and marked in a diary the date of each next tuning. She recorded a considerable improvement in earnings, and saw that there was more to be made from the playing of the violin than had hitherto been realized: country-and-Western evenings in lonely public houses, the crossroads platform dances of summer—a practice that in 1951 had not entirely died out. Owen Dromgould delighted in his violin and would play it anywhere, for profit or not. But Violet was keen on the profit.

So the first marriage busily progressed, and when eventually Violet inherited her father's house she took her husband to live there. Once a farmhouse, it was no longer so, the possession of the land that gave it this title having long ago been lost through the fondness for strong drink that for generations had dogged the family but had not reached Violet herself.

"Now, tell me what's there," her husband requested often in their early years, and Violet told him about the house she had brought him to, remotely situated on the edge of the mountains that were blue in certain lights, standing back a bit from a bend in a lane. She described the nooks in the rooms, the wooden window shutters he could hear her pulling over and latching when wind from the east caused a draft that disturbed the fire in the room once called the parlor. She described the pattern of the carpet on the single flight of stairs, the blue-and-white porcelain knobs of the kitchen cupboards, the front door that was never opened. He loved to listen. His mother, who had never entirely come to terms with his affliction, had been impatient. His father, a stableman at Barnagorm House who'd died after a fall, he had never known. "Lean as a greyhound," Violet described his father from a photograph that remained.

She conjured up the big, cold hall of Barnagorm House. "What we walk around on the way to the stairs is a table with a peacock on it. An enormous silvery bird with bits of colored glass set in the splay of its wings to represent the splendor of the feathers. Greens and blues," she said when he asked the color, and yes, she was certain it was only glass, not jewels, because once when he was doing his best with the badly flawed grand in the drawing room she had been told. The stairs were on a curve, he knew from going up and down them so often to the Chappell in the nursery. The first landing was dark as a tunnel, Violet said, with two sofas, one at each end, and rows of unsmiling portraits half lost in the shadows of the walls.

"We're passing Doocey's now," Violet would say. "Father Feely's getting petrol at the pumps." Esso it was at Doocey's, and he knew how the word was written because he'd asked and had been told. Two different colors were employed; the shape of the design had been compared to shapes he could feel. He saw, through Violet's eyes, the gaunt façade of the McKirdys' house on the outskirts of Oghill. He saw the pallid face of the stationer in Kiliath. He saw his mother's eyes closed in death, her hands crossed on her breast. He saw the mountains, blue on some days, misted away to gray on others. "A primrose isn't flamboyant," Violet said. "More like straw or country butter, with a spot of color in the middle." And he would nod, and know. Soft blue, like smoke, she said about the mountains; the spot in the middle more orange than red. He knew no more about smoke than what she had told him, but he could tell those sounds. He knew what red was, he insisted, because of the sound; orange because you could taste it. He could see red in the Esso sign and the orange spot in the primrose. "Straw" and "country butter" helped him, and when Violet called Mr. Whitten gnarled it was enough. A certain Mother Superior was austere. Anna Craigie was fanciful about the eyes. Thomas in the sawmills was an albino. Bat Conlon had the forehead of the Merricks' retriever, which was stroked every time the Merricks' Broadwood was attended to.

In the time between one woman and the next, the piano tuner had managed without anyone, fetched by the possessors of pianos and driven to their houses, assisted in his shopping and his housekeeping. He felt he had become a nuisance to people, and knew that Violet would not have wanted that. Nor would she have wanted the business she built up for him to be neglected because she was no longer there. She was proud that he played the organ in St. Colman's Church. "Don't ever stop doing that," she whispered some time before she whispered her last few words, and so he went alone to the church. It was on a Sunday, when two years almost had passed, that the romance with Belle began.

Since the time of her rejection Belle had been unable to shake off her jealousy, resentful because she had looks and Violet hadn't, bitter because it seemed to her that the punishment of blindness was a punishment for her, too. For what else but a punishment could you call the dark the sightless lived in? And what else but a punishment was it that darkness should be thrown over her beauty? Yet there had been no sin to punish and they would have been a handsome couple, she and Owen Dromgould. An act of grace it would have been, her beauty given to a man who did not know that it was there.

It was because her misfortune did not cease to nag at her that Belle remained unmarried. She assisted her father first and then her brother in the family shop, making out tickets for the clocks and watches that were left in for repair, noting the details for the engraving of sports trophies. She served behind the single counter, the Christmas season her busy time, glassware and weather indicators the most popular wedding gifts, cigarette lighters and inexpensive jewelry for lesser occasions. In time, clocks and watches required only the fitting of a battery, and so the gift side of the business was expanded. But while that time passed there was no man in the town

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who lived up to the one who had been taken from her.

Belle had been born above the shop, and when house and shop became her brother's she continued to live there. Her brother's children were born, but there was still room for her, and her position in the shop itself was not usurped. It was she who kept the chickens at the back, who always had been in charge of them, given the responsibility on her tenth birthday: that, too, continued. That she lived with a disappointment had long ago become part of her, had made her what she was for her nieces and her nephew. It was in her eyes, some people noted, even lent her beauty a quality that enhanced it. When the romance began with the man who had once rejected her, her brother and his wife considered she was making a mistake, but did not say so, only laughingly asked if she intended taking the chickens with her.

As long ago as childhood her love of him had made her happy; later there had been love's expectation. Passing through middle age, she remembered a person who was herself, whose nature seemed different from that of the woman she became. Some part of her had withered, but when the feeling of love began again it was as though that had not happened. All around her, a dinginess brightened, and it was not too late.

That Sunday the two stood talking in the graveyard when the handful of other parishioners had gone. "Come and I'll show you the graves," he said, and led the way, knowing exactly where he was going, stepping onto the grass and feeling the first gravestone with his fingers. His grandmother, he said, on his father's side, and for a moment Belle wanted to feel the incised letters herself instead of looking at them. They both knew, as they moved among the graves, that the parishioners who'd gone home were very much aware of the two who had been left behind. On Sundays, ever since Violet's death, he had walked to and from his house, unless it happened to be raining, in which case the man who drove old Mrs. Purtill to church took him home also. "Would you like a walk, Belle?" he asked when he had shown her his family graves. She said she would.

BELLE didn't take the chickens with her when she became a wife. She said she'd had enough of chickens. Afterward she regretted that, because every time she did anything in the house that had been Violet's she felt it had been done by Violet before her. When she cut up meat for a stew, standing with the light falling on the board that Violet had used, and on the knife, she felt herself a follower. She diced carrots, hoping that Violet had sliced them. She bought new wooden spoons because Violet's had shrivelled away so. She painted the upright rails of the bannisters. She painted the inside of the front door that was never opened. She disposed of the stacks of women's magazines, years old, that she found in an upstairs cupboard. She threw away a frying pan because she considered it unhygienic. She ordered new vinyl for the kitchen floor. But she kept the flower beds at the back weeded in case anyone coming to the house might

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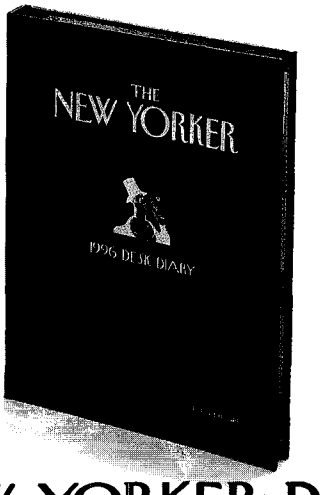

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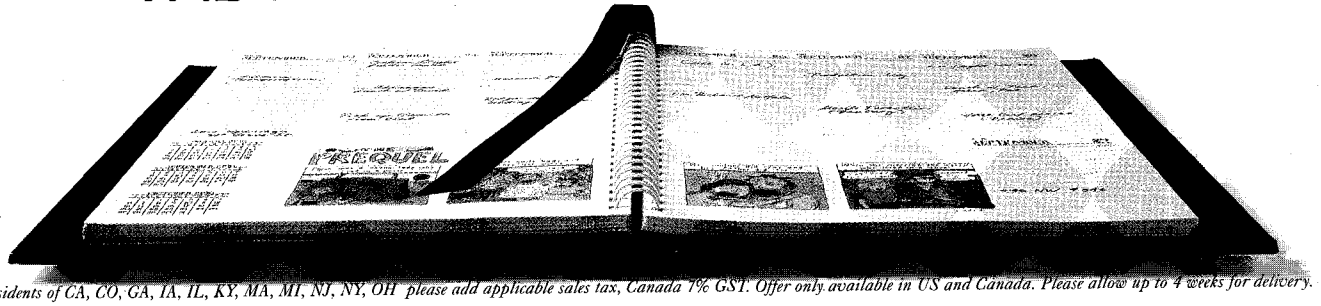

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"It's his favorite time of year."

• •

say she was letting the place become run down.

There was always this dichotomy: what to keep up, what to change. Was she giving in to Violet when she tended her flower beds? Was she giving in to pettiness when she threw away a frying pan and three wooden spoons? Whatever Belle did she afterward doubted herself. The dumpy figure of Violet, gray-haired as she had been in the end, her eyes gone small in the plumpness of her face, seemed irritatingly to command. And the unseeing husband they shared, softly playing his violin in one room or another, did not know that his first wife had dressed badly, did not know she had thickened and become sloppy, did not know she had been an unclean cook. That Belle was the one who was alive, that she was offered all a man's affection, that she plundered his other woman's possessions and occupied her bedroom and drove her car, should have been enough. It should have been everything, but as time went on it seemed to Belle to be scarcely anything at all. He had become set in ways that had been allowed and hallowed in a marriage of nearly forty years: that was what was always there.

A year after the wedding, as the couple sat one lunchtime in the car which Belle had drawn into the gateway to a field, he said:

"You'd tell me if it was too much for you?"

"Too much, Owen?"

"Driving all over the county. Having to get me in and out. Having to sit there listening."

"It's not too much."

"You're good, the way you've patience."

"I don't think I'm good at all."

"I knew you were in church that Sunday. I could smell the perfume you had on. Even at the organ I could smell it."

"I'll never forget that Sunday."

"I loved you when you let me show you the graves."

"I loved you before that."

"I don't want to tire you out, with all the traipsing about after pianos. I could let it go, you know."

He would do that for her, her thought was as he spoke. He wasn't much for a woman, he had said another time: a blind man moving on toward the end of his days. He confessed that when first he wanted to marry her he hadn't put it to her for more than two months, knowing better than she what she'd be letting herself in for if she said yes. "What's that Belle look like these days?" he had asked

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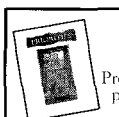

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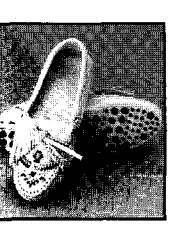

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Violet a few years ago, and Violet hadn't answered at first. Then apparently she'd said, "Belle still looks a girl."

"I wouldn't want you to stop your work. Not ever, Owen."

"You're all heart, my love. Don't say you're not good."

"It gets me out and about, too, you know. More than ever in my life. Down all those avenues to houses I didn't know were there. Towns I've never been to. People I never knew. It was restricted before."

The word slipped out, but it didn't matter. He did not reply that he understood about restriction, for that was not his style. When they were getting to know one another, after that Sunday by the church, he said he'd often thought of her in her brother's jeweller's shop, wrapping up what was purchased there, as she had wrapped for him the watch he bought for one of Violet's birthdays. He'd thought of her putting up the grilles over the windows in the evenings and locking the shop door, and then going upstairs to sit with her brother's family. When they were married she told him more: how most of the days of her life had been spent, only her chickens her own. "Smart in her clothes," Violet had added when she said the woman he'd rejected still looked a girl.

There hadn't been any kind of honeymoon, but a few months after he had wondered if travelling about was too much for her he took Belle away to a seaside resort where he and Violet had many times spent a week. They stayed in the same boarding house, the Sans Souci, and walked on the long, empty strand and in lanes where larks scuttered in and out of the fuchsia, and on the cliffs. They drank in Malley's public house. They lay in autumn sunshine on the dunes.

"You're good to have thought of it." Belle smiled at him, pleased because he wanted her to be happy.

"Set us up for the winter, Belle."

She knew it wasn't easy for him. They had come to this place because he knew no other; he was aware before they set out of the complication that might develop in his emotions when they arrived. She had seen that in his face, a stoicism that was there for her. Privately, he bore the guilt of betrayal, stirred up by the smell of the sea and seaweed. The voices in the boarding house were the voices Violet had heard. For Violet, too, the scent of honeysuckle had lingered into October. It was Violet who first said a week in the autumn sun would set them up for the winter: that showed in him, also, a moment after he spoke the words.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he said. "When we're back we'll get you the television, Belle."

"Oh, but you—"

"You'd tell me."

They were walking near the lighthouse on the cape when he said that. He would have offered the television to Violet, but Violet must have said she wouldn't be bothered with the thing. It would never be turned on, she had probably argued; you only got silliness on it anyway.

"You're good to me," Belle said instead.

"Ah no, no."

When they were close enough to the lighthouse he called out and a man called back from a window. "Hold on a minute," the man said, and by the time he opened the door he must have guessed that the wife he'd known had died. "You'll take a drop?" he offered when they were inside, when the death and the remarriage had been mentioned. Whiskey was poured, and Belle felt that the three glasses lifted in salutation were an honoring of her, although this was not said. It rained on the way back to the boarding house, the last evening of the holiday.

"Nice for the winter," he said as she drove the next day through rain that didn't cease. "The television."

When it came, it was installed in the small room that once was called the parlor, next to the kitchen. This was where mostly they sat, where the radio was. A fortnight after the arrival of the television set Belle acquired a small black sheepdog that a farmer didn't want because it was afraid of sheep. This dog became hers and was always called hers. She fed it and looked after it. She got it used to travelling with them in the car. She gave it a new name, Maggie, which it answered to in time.

But even with the dog and the television, with additions and disposals in the house, with being so sincerely assured that she was loved, with being told she was good, nothing changed for Belle. The woman who for so long had taken her husband's arm, who had guided him into rooms of houses where he coaxed pianos back to life, still claimed existence. Not as a tiresome

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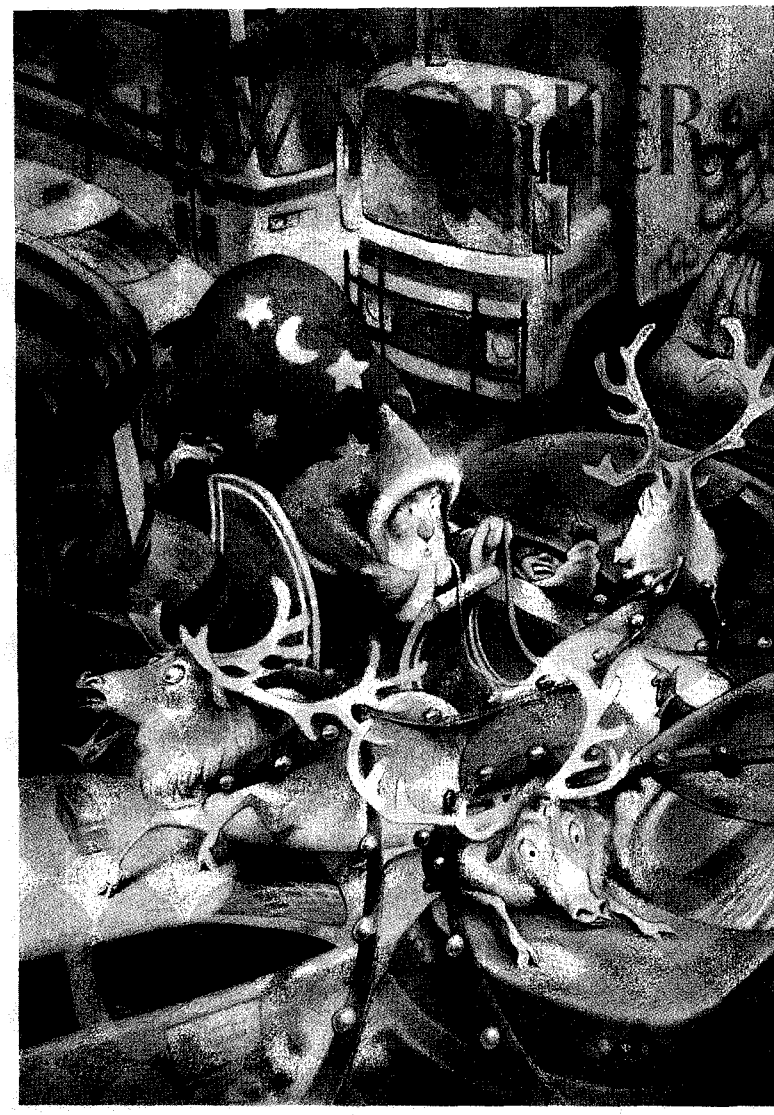

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ghost, some unforgiving spectre uncertainly there, but as if some part of her had been left in the man she'd loved.

Sensitive in ways that other people weren't, Owen Dromgould continued to sense his second wife's unease. She knew he did. It was why he had offered to give up his work, why he'd taken her to Violet's seashore and borne there the guilt of his betrayal, why there was a television set now, and a sheepdog. He had guessed why she'd re-covered the kitchen floor. Proudly, he had raised his glass to her in the company of a man who had known Violet. Proudly, he had sat with her in the dining room of the boarding house and in Malley's public house.

Belle made herself remember all that. She made herself see the bottle of John Jameson taken from a cupboard in the lighthouse, and hear the boarding-house voices. He understood, he did his best to comfort her; his affection was in everything he did. But Violet would have told him which leaves were on the turn. Violet would have reported that the tide was going out or coming in. Too late Belle realized that. Violet had been his blind man's vision. Violet had left her no room to breathe.

ONE day, coming away from the house that was the most distant they visited, the first time Belle had been there, he said, "Did you ever see a room as sombre as that one? Is it the holy pictures that do it?"

Belle backed the car and straightened it, then edged it through a gateway that, thirty years ago, hadn't been made wide enough.

"Sombre?" she said on a lane like a riverbed, steering around the potholes as best she could.

"We used to wonder could it be they didn't want anything colorful in the way of a wallpaper in case it wasn't respectful to the pictures."

Belle didn't comment on that. She eased the Vauxhall out onto the tarred road and drove in silence over a stretch of bogland. Vividly she saw the holy pictures in the room where Mrs. Grenaghan's piano was: Virgin and Child, Sacred Heart, St. Catherine with her lily, the Virgin on her own, Jesus in glory. They hung against nondescript brown; there were statues on the mantelpiece and on a corner shelf. Mrs. Grenaghan had brought tea and biscuits to that small, melancholy room, speaking in a hushed tone as if the holiness demanded that.

"What pictures?" Belle asked, not turning her head, although she might have, for there was no other traffic and the bog road was straight.

"Aren't the pictures still in there? Holy pictures all over the place?"

"They must have taken them down."

"What's there then?"

Belle went a little faster. She said a fox had come from nowhere, over to the left. It was standing still, she said, the way foxes do.

"You want to pull up and watch him, Belle?"

"No. No, he's moved on now. Was it Mrs. Grenaghan's daughter who played that piano?"

"Oh, it was. And she hasn't seen that girl in years. We used to say the holy pictures maybe drove her away. What's on the walls now?"

"A striped paper." And Belle added, "There's a photograph of the daughter on the mantelpiece."

Some time later, on another day, when he referred to one of the sisters at the convent in Meena as having cheeks as flushed as an eating apple, Belle said that that nun was chalky white these days, her face pulled down and sunken. "She has an illness so," he said.

Suddenly more confident, not caring what people thought, Belle rooted out Violet's plants from the flower beds at the back, and grassed the flower beds over. She told her husband of a change at Doocey's garage: Texaco sold instead of Esso. She described the Texaco logo, the big red star and how the letters of the word were arranged. She avoided stopping at Doocey's in case a conversation took place there, in case Doocey were asked if Esso had let him down, or what. "Well, no, I wouldn't call it silvery exactly," Belle said about the peacock in the hall of Barnagorm House. "If they cleaned it up I'd say it's brass underneath." Upstairs, the sofas at each end of the landing had new loose covers, bunches of different-colored chrysanthemums on them. "Well no, not *lean*, I wouldn't call him that," Belle said with the photograph of her husband's father in her hand. "A sturdy face, I'd say." A schoolteacher whose teeth were once described as mammoth had false teeth now, less of a mouthful, her smile sedate. Time had apparently drenched the

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bright white of the McKirdys' façade, almost a gray you'd call it. "Forget-me-not blue," Belle said one day, speaking of the mountains that were blue when the weather brought that color out. "You'd hardly credit it." And it was never again said in the piano tuner's house that the blue of the mountains was the subtle blue of smoke.

OWEN DROMGOULD had run his fingers over the bark of trees. He could tell the difference in the outline of their leaves; he could tell the thorns of gorse and bramble. He knew birds from their song, dogs from their bark, cats from the touch of them on his legs. There were the letters on the gravestones, the stops of the organ, his violin. He could see red—berries on holly and cotoneaster. He could smell lavender and thyme.

All that could not be taken from him. And it didn't matter if, overnight, the color had worn off the kitchen knobs. It didn't matter if the china light shade in the kitchen had a crack he hadn't heard about before. What mattered was damage done to something as fragile as a dream.

The wife he had first chosen had dressed drably: from silence and inflexions—more than from words—he learnt that now. Her gray hair straggled to her shoulders, her back was a little humped. He poked his way about, and they were two old people when they went out on their rounds, older than they were in their ageless happiness. She wouldn't have hurt a fly, she wasn't a person you could be jealous of, yet of course it was hard on a new wife to be haunted by happiness, to be challenged by the simplicities there had been. He had given himself to two women; he hadn't withdrawn himself from the first, he didn't from the second.

Each house that contained a piano brought forth its contradictions. The pearls old Mrs. Purtill wore were opals, the pallid skin of the stationer in Kiliath was freckled, the two lines of oaks above Oghill were surely beeches? "Of course, of course," Owen Dromgould agreed, since it was fair that he should do so. Belle could not be blamed for making her claim, and claims could not be made without damage or destruction. Belle would win in the end because the living always do. And that seemed fair also, since Violet had won in the beginning and had had the better years. ♦

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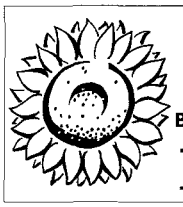
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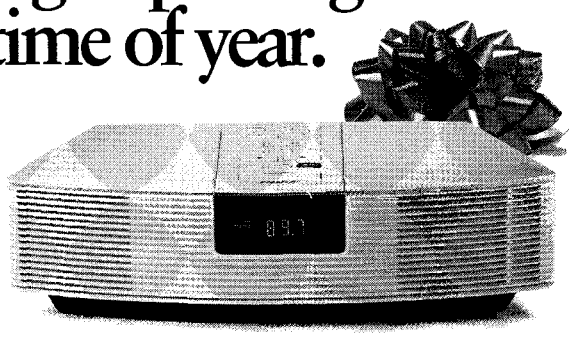

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SUCH A SUCKER AS ME

Abraham Lincoln, as he saw himself.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

CAN a homely, gawky man of backwoods origin, with scarcely a year's formal schooling and not a day's experience of administrative public office, become, in a time of catastrophic civil strife, a great American President? Yes, we all know the answer to be, if the man is Abraham Lincoln. His heroic story needs to be told to every generation, and the Harvard history professor David Herbert Donald, with his "Lincoln" (Simon & Schuster; $35), tells it once more. Donald, whose biographies of Charles Sumner and Thomas Wolfe have won Pulitzer Prizes, explains in his preface that, inspired by a remark of President John F. Kennedy's to the effect that no President should be judged by one who "has not sat in his chair . . . and learned why he made his decisions," he has attempted "a biography written from Lincoln's point of view, using the information and ideas that were available to him." He has minimized, then, vast areas of the national history—from the deep roots of the Civil War to the details of that war's battles and military campaigns—to give us a kind of foregrounded, close-focus Lincoln, "perhaps a bit more grainy than most, with more attention to his unquenchable ambition, to his brain-numbing labor in his law practice, to his tempestuous married life, and to his repeated defeats." Possibly fearful of drowning in the ocean of secondary Lincoln studies, Donald has "tried as far as possible to write from the original sources—that is, from firsthand contemporary accounts by people who saw and talked with the President" and, above all, from Lincoln's own writings. At the outset of eighty-six small-type pages of sources and notes, he lists his major predecessors in biography—the ten volumes by John G. Nicolay and John Hay, Lincoln's White House secretaries; the three by William H. Herndon, Lincoln's Springfield, Illinois, law partner, and Jesse W. Weik; the two by Senator Albert J. Beveridge; the six by Carl Sandburg; the four by J. G. Randall, completed by Richard N. Current; and the relatively recent volumes by Mark E. Neely, Jr., Phillip S. Paludan, Benjamin P. Thomas, Reinhard H. Luthin, and Stephen B. Oates—and confides, "I have not read or consulted these distinguished works in the preparation of the present volume. I cannot say, however, that I have not been influenced by them, for I used these books in my classes for many years."

His biography comes with a theme, an inversion of the dynamism traditionally ascribed to great leaders: "Lincoln's fatalism," or "the essential passivity of his nature." As epigraph the volume bears a sentence Lincoln wrote in April of 1864 to Albert G. Hodges, editor of the Frankfort (Kentucky) *Commonwealth*, who had inquired why he had shifted from a pledge, in his First Inaugural Address, not to interfere with slavery to a policy of emancipation. Having answered at some length, the President added, "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me." This is the biography's epigraph. Lincoln went on, in language echoing that of his Second Inaugural Address:

> Now, at the end of three years struggle the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man devised, or expected. God alone can claim it. . . . If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new cause to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

Lincoln, who declined to join any orthodox Christian church, was obliged to declare, when he was running for Congress in 1846, that he had "never denied the truth of the Scriptures" and that "in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the 'Doctrine of Necessity'—that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control." As the carnage of the Civil War piled ever higher about him, he "who couldn't cut the head off of a chicken, and who was sick at the sight of blood," as he said, took to the Bible and theology in fresh earnest. His Second Inaugural Address proposes nothing less than to demonstrate to a suffering people, North and South, that—quoting Psalm 19—"the judgements of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether." God rules even though (or because) "every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."

Calvinist fatalism seems to act, paradoxically, as a spur to enterprise; surely one of the curious features of New World development is that a Protestant nation dominated by believers in an inflexible and inscrutable predestination should have proved so dynamic, while former Iberian colonies under the influence of a Catholic system of mediatory works should have proved relatively torpid. Whatever comfort fatalistic resignation brought to the dark moments of Lincoln's life, Donald's biography provides numerous instances of exceptional initiative: the farm boy's determined pursuit of reading and learning; his departure from his father's household and agricultural labor for the hamlet of New Salem, Illinois, and the professional chances it offered; his decision to run for the state legislature at the age of twenty-three; his step up into the practice of law a few years later; his courtship of Mary Todd and the social advance it represented, in the élite circles of Springfield; his successful campaign to become a Whig representative to the United States Congress in 1846; his pushing himself forward, after one undistinguished term in Washington and twenty years of private law practice, as the opponent of Stephen A. Douglas in the 1858 Illinois senatorial race; his insistence on a series of debates, which won him national publicity and an appearance of equality with the Little Giant; and his very shrewdly managed capture of the 1860 Presidential nomination from

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the fledgling Republican Party. Though he was fond, as Professor Donald tells us, of quoting Hamlet's admonition "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will," the Railsplitter took a hand in hewing his own fate. He succeeded where neither of his Whig heroes, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, did: in becoming President.

Though Donald promises to show us events as Lincoln saw them, he provides much testimony of how others saw Lincoln. David Davis, a portly Maryland native who, as a district judge in Illinois, shared with the busy lawyer many courtrooms and hours of travel on the circuit between 1849 and 1860, reminisced that "Mr. Lincoln was not a sociable man by any means" and had "no strong feelings for any person—mankind or thing." Yet Davis wrote his wife of "Mr. Lincoln's exceeding honesty and fairness," and in emergencies designated Lincoln to preside in his stead. A speech Lincoln gave in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1848 was admired by one newspaper as "showing a searching mind, and a cool judgement," while another called it "rather witty, though truth and reason and argument were treated as out of the question, as unnecessary and not to be expected"; still others called it "absolutely nauseous" and "a melancholy display." His platform manner was criticized for "his awkward gesticulations, the ludicrous management of his voice, and the comical expression of his countenance." Edwin McMasters Stanton, who was to be Lincoln's Secretary of War and was to say, at his deathbed, "Now he belongs to the ages," had quite a different comment in 1855, when Lincoln was brought to Cincinnati to consult on a case in which Stanton was active. "Why did you bring that d——d long armed Ape here?" he asked the associate who had hired Lincoln. "He does not know any thing and can do you no good." Lincoln himself, as his prospects were warming in 1858, scoffed: " 'Just think,' he exclaimed, wrapping his long arms around his knees and giving a roar of laughter, 'of such a sucker as me as President!' "

His partner, William Herndon, rather derogatively called him "purely and entirely a case lawyer," and Douglas in debate labelled him a political chameleon. Donald speaks of his "hard ego." Early in the war, Jessie Frémont, the wife of John C. Frémont, who had been the first Republican candidate for President and was now one of Lincoln's insubordinate generals, glimpsed a chink in Lincoln's famous amiability and patience: receiving a letter explaining her husband's actions, he—according to her—"smiled with an expression that was not agreeable," cut off her own explanations with a curt "You are quite a female politician," and, in conclusion, spoke in a voice she found hard and "repelling."

Abraham Lincoln: The great American President as fatalist. Photograph by George A. Tice.

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LINCOLN, a native of Kentucky, began with very little in his racial views to distinguish them from those of Southern slaveholders. They and the Democrats wished to extend the institution of slavery into at least some of the territories; Lincoln and the Republican Party, born of the revulsion against Stephen Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, wanted to exclude it from these territories. No sizable political party proposed abolishing slavery where it existed, or establishing Negro equality. Speaking in the fourth debate with Douglas, in a county of Illinois which had been settled by immigrants from Kentucky and Tennessee, Lincoln stated, "I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people. . . . There is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality." Still, this was a distance from Douglas's reiterated assertions that the American government "was made by the white man, for the benefit of the white man, to be administered by white men" and that any "mixture or amalgamation with inferior races" would lead to "degeneration, demoralization, and degradation." Citing Douglas's remark that "he was for the negro against the crocodile, but for the white man against the negro," Lincoln protested the implication that "the negro is no longer a man but a brute . . . that he ranks with the crocodile and the reptile." From the modest premise that the black man is a man, Lincoln deduced that black men were entitled to the freedoms extended

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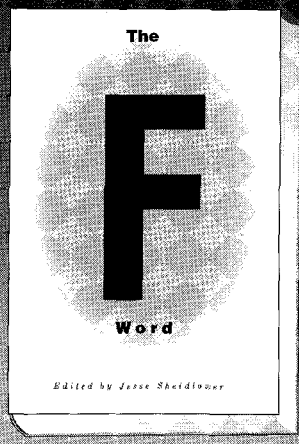

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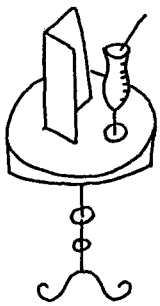
to men in the Declaration of Independence.

The Emancipation Proclamation was issued, in its own phrasing, "as a fit and necessary war measure," and exempted slavery in all Union areas and states. But Lincoln's initially conservative racial attitudes—for years, he favored a scheme for the "voluntary emigration" of African-Americans to a tropical colony—eased to permit the enlistment of black troops to fight for the Union. By the war's end, Donald writes, "The stalwart service rendered by nearly 200,000 African-Americans in the military had eroded his earlier doubts about their courage and intelligence. . . . He believed that the more intelligent blacks, especially those who served in the army, were entitled to the suffrage." For the first time in the history of the White House, Negroes—including Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth—were received there as guests. When Lincoln visited freshly liberated Richmond, the black workmen recognized him, and their leader went forward, exclaiming "Bless the Lord, there is the great Messiah!" and dropped to his knees. Lincoln, embarrassed, told him to rise, and kneel only to God, in thanks "for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy."



Lincoln the liberal saint cannot be separated from the unprecedented savagery of the war. As the conflict dragged on without conclusion, he became increasingly ruthless, widely suspending habeas corpus, suppressing newspapers, extracting yet more conscriptions from a weary North. He recognized ahead of many of his generals the requirements of all-out war. According to Donald, "Lincoln had developed a contempt for what he scornfully called 'strategy.' What he thought was needed was not more maneuvering but assault after assault on the Confederate army." Excessive caution finally cost McClellan the command of the Army of the Potomac; Meade, the victor at Gettysburg, disappointed the Commander-in-Chief by not pursuing Lee's army with his exhausted own. When Meade engaged Lee in a campaign of feints and maneuvers, Lincoln admonished him, "Only be sure to fight; the people demand it." He wrote General-in-Chief Halleck, "If our army cannot fall upon the enemy and hurt him where he is, it is plain to me it can gain nothing by attempting to follow him over a succession of intrenched lines into a fortified city." Though Mary Lincoln called Grant a "butcher," and thought him "not fit to be at the head of an army," the President knew that in Grant he had at last found his man—a general willing to use the North's superiority in numbers to bludgeon the enemy into submission. With Grant's appointment as lieutenant-general of all the armies, Lincoln could stop trying to run the war with ignored directives. Although in May of 1864, in the battle of the Wilderness and then at Spotsylvania, ferocious fighting left the Army of the Potomac with thirty-two thousand casualties, Grant nevertheless refused to retreat, writing in a dispatch, "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." Lincoln telegraphed back, "Hold on with a bulldog grip, and chew and choke, as much as possible."

With Sherman's capture of Atlanta in early September of that year, and Farragut's capture of Mobile Bay in late August, the sluggish tide finally turned. Lincoln, beset by Radicals within his own party and prepared to lose the 1864 election to the Democrat candidate, McClellan, instead carried every state of the reduced Union but New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky. As Confederate feelers for armistice terms began to come in, he held firm to the legal fiction that the seceding states were still in the Union, though dominated by "combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings." He refused negotiations, lest recognition of the Confederacy be implied. When General Sheridan reported to him that "if the thing is pressed I think that Lee will surrender," the President wrote Grant, "Let the *thing* be pressed." Lee surrendered; Lincoln's enemies on the battlefield and in Congress melted away. His had been the ordeal; his was the triumph. Senator James Harlan recalled, "His whole appearance, poise, and bearing had marvelously changed. He seemed the very personification of supreme satisfaction. His conversation was, of course, correspondingly exhilarating." On the afternoon of April 14th, the

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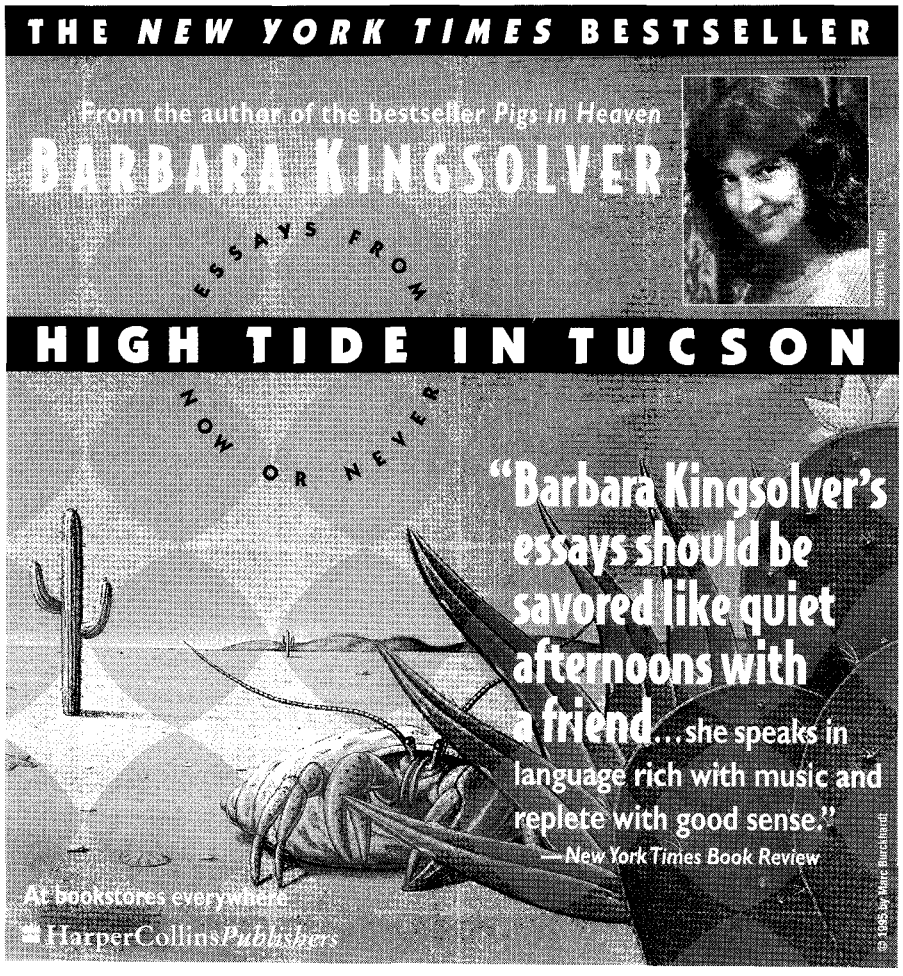
President and Mary took a carriage ride around Washington, and when she remarked upon his cheerfulness he told her, "We must *both*, be more cheerful in the future—between the war and the loss of our darling Willie—we have both, been very miserable." That night, at Ford's Theatre, with Lincoln's trusty companion and bodyguard from Illinois, Ward Lamon, off on a mission to Richmond, and the Metropolitan policeman assigned to protect Lincoln away from his post, John Wilkes Booth—by simply showing his calling card to the lone guard, a White House footman—slipped into the Presidential box.

WOULD Lincoln's reputation be so exalted if he had not been assassinated? He would surely have dealt with Congress more tactfully and adroitly, with more weight of prestige and popular support, than did the crude and isolated Andrew Johnson. But Johnson faithfully carried out Lincoln's policy of Reconstruction as it had been adumbrated; both Presidents were soft on the South, and under a Lincoln Administration why would not the Southern state governments, once leniently reconstituted, have taken the same swift measures that they actually did to legally shackle the freed Negroes? The Congress, with its Radical Republican majority, would have likely registered its same indignation and punitive reaction; and what Woodrow Wilson, in his "Division and Reunion: 1829-1889," called "an extraordinary carnival of public crime" would have taken place under the rule of carpetbaggers, scalawags, and abruptly enfranchised ex-slaves, along with the rise of terrorist groups like the Ku Klux Klan. However compassionately presided over by Lincoln, the aftermath of the Civil War would have been a messy anticlimax, and its Realpolitik might well have sullied the nation's shining memory of the Great Emancipator.

Yet in any case his writings and utterances would survive, and on these his reputation most securely rests. His humorous common sense and clarity of analysis soon outgrew the elaborate rhetoric of mid-century political speechifying. Having read little literature beyond the King James Bible, Shakespeare, Aesop's fables, and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," he worked toward a directness



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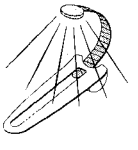

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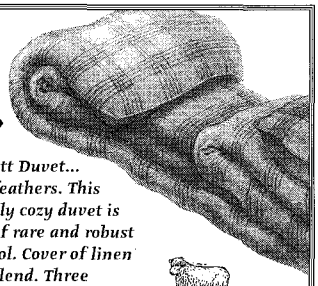

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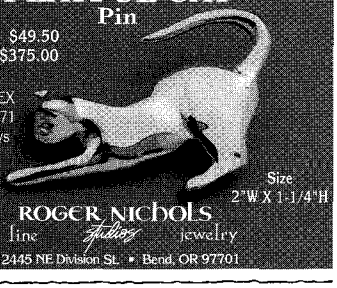

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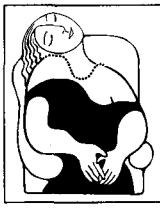

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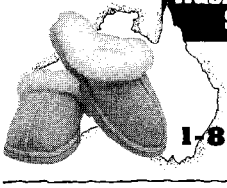

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> I close. We are not we must not be aliens or enemies but fellow countrymen and brethren. . . . The mystic chords which proceeding from so many battle fields and so many patriot graves pass through all the hearts and all the hearths in this broad continent of ours will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation.

Lincoln made this of it:

> I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. . . . The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

A speaking intimacy and, with it, a compelling urgency and warmth were achieved through simplification and a subtly improved concreteness. "Fellow countrymen and brethren" became "friends," "hearths" became "hearthstones," and Seward's forced "mystic chords . . . patriot graves . . . hearts . . . hearths . . . ancient music . . . guardian angel" trope was deftly broken into separate components; especially striking is the way in which the upward glance at the supposed "guardian angel of the nation" was turned inward, to the "better angels of our nature." Like Twain, Lincoln pared Latinate rotundity from American English and conjured music from plain words. As a lawyer and a politician, Lincoln labored lovingly over his texts. His habit of making a point or deflecting criticism by telling a story shows a literary imagination at work. In the war years, even his hastiest communiqué can flash out with an unexpected image or aptness of phrase. His rural background effortlessly supplied vivifying animal metaphors. To General Hooker, who was contemplating moving his troops across the Rappahannock:

> In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river, like an ox jumped half over a fence, and liable to be torn by dogs, front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other.

The mightiest issues come clear in the homely illustration. To a general who suggested that the Confederates wanted to sue for peace on the old terms:

> Still, to use a coarse, but an expressive figure, broken eggs cannot be mended. I have issued the emancipation proclamation, and I can not retract it.

He is so direct as to spring a smile, even where bloody matters are at stake. To a general who wanted to be restored to command:

> I have never doubted your courage and devotion to the cause. But you have just lost a Division, and *prima facie* the fault is upon you; and while that remains unchanged, for me to put you in command again, is to justly subject me to the charge of having put you there on purpose to have you lose another.

In a letter designed to be read aloud to a rally of more than fifty thousand Unionists in Springfield, an incantatory quality overtakes a succession of assertions:

> You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you; but, no matter. Fight you, then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time, then, for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes.

This communication was cheered and reprinted in newspapers across the country and editorially praised as "one of those remarkably clear and forcible documents that come only from Mr. Lincoln's pen." In this dark year of 1863, he helped himself with his pen; the Springfield letter and some other public letters from the same period, Donald writes, "were considered so effective that they were collected and republished for wide circulation as 'The Letters of President Lincoln on Questions of National Policy' in a twenty-two-page pamphlet." As Roosevelt used the radio, Lincoln used the medium of print. His letters and documents, public and private—available in two volumes of the Library of America—form an archive like none other, with even the most impersonal page somehow graced by the soul and accent of a man.

Professor Donald gives us the man in six hundred readable pages dense with scholarship. The reader does not doubt that the harvest of a thousand special studies of Lincoln has been economically and judiciously reaped. Everything is here—from Lincoln's love of Ann Rutledge (it was real, and she was plump)

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to his inveterate theatregoing (it was an escape from the office seekers who relentlessly harassed him)—but it is here in a rather dry, compacted way, one sometimes feels. Lincoln has had the juice squeezed out of him. One wishes now and then for one of Sandburg's leisurely, dreamy ruminations. Lincoln is so foregrounded that the other characters are excessively marginal; Donald does not demonstrate much of the ability shown by such historians of the era as Allan Nevins and Roy Nichols to impart a memorable adjectival embrace of this or that long-dead but lovable political rascal. Political friends and foes blend together under names like Wade and Davis and Bates and Swett. The big gray pages form a matted web of facts for which this rereader would have been grateful for a fuller index. I searched long, for instance, to find again this anecdote, in which Lincoln came unexpectedly to life:

> When they [the Presidential party, visiting troops in Virginia] reached the Potomac Creek, [General] McDowell called their attention to a trestle bridge his men were erecting a hundred feet above the water in that deep and wide ravine. "Let us walk over," exclaimed the President boyishly, and though the pathway was only a single plank wide, he led the way. About halfway across Stanton became dizzy and Dahlgren, who was somewhat giddy himself, had to help the Secretary. But Lincoln, despite the grinding cares of his office, was in fine physical shape and never lost his balance.

No, it is not fair to say that Donald has squeezed all the juice out of Lincoln. What he has given us is nutrient-rich Lincoln concentrate. ♦

REDS SCARED

Why Solzhenitsyn matters, in the Politburo's own words.

BY DAVID REMNICK

EVER since Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn returned to Russia last year, he has been ridiculed up, down, and sideways. When he gave a speech in front of the State Duma, the distinguished legislators (many of them former Communist Party apparatchiks) made a great show of their boredom and disdain; a few snoozed on their desks. In the media he is depicted variously as lost in time and as an autocratic pedant: Rip van Winkle meets Ayatollah Khomeini. While one op-ed warrior demands that Solzhenitsyn shut up, another wants to know why he is so quiet. Last spring, the journalist Olga Chaikovskaya wrote a front-page open letter to him in the weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. Why, she asked, have you been "silent" on the war in Chechnya? (Solzhenitsyn had in fact denounced the war and called for Chechen independence in *Argumenty i Fakty*, a weekly with a circulation in the millions.) Until recently, Solzhenitsyn appeared on television every other week for fifteen minutes to pronounce on one theme or another; for this he was mocked as a "talk-show host," and one unable to compete with the profundities of the real pros. (State television authorities finally cancelled the show, citing low ratings.) It's never been easy to be a prophet in one's own country, and it's twice as hard to come home.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

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Solzhenitsyn, it is true, makes himself difficult to love. Unlike the late Andrei Sakharov, his great sparring partner in dissent, he believes in an unfamiliar, off-putting set of principles and declares them loudly and

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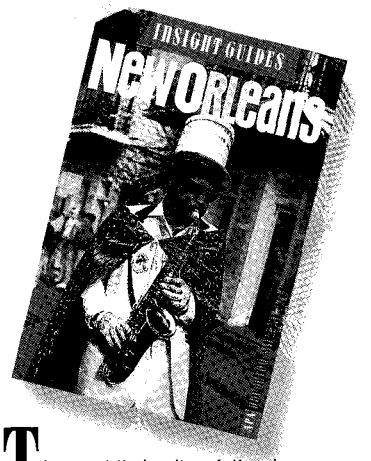

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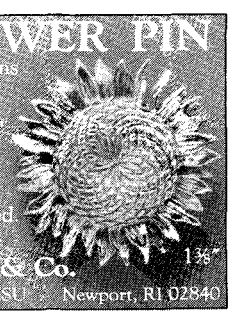

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with illiberal intent. He has doubts about modern democracy. He reviles the "manure" of Western pop culture. He is important and self-important at the same time. And, besides, his beard is ridiculous—too much like Dostoyevski's. I suppose there are a hundred reasons for disliking Solzhenitsyn, and there are precious few public reminders of why he should still be admired.

Michael Scammell's definitive 1984 biography of Solzhenitsyn was one of them. Now Scammell has come across with a kind of postscript: "The Solzhenitsyn Files: Secret Soviet Documents Reveal One Man's Fight Against the Monolith." Those inclined to search it out—the book is being published by the rather obscure edition q, inc.—will be rewarded with a more thorough understanding of both the dimensions of Solzhenitsyn's heroism and the obsession with him which prevailed inside the Kremlin and the K.G.B. No "talk-show host"—no writer, in fact—has had a greater effect on the course of modern history.

On June 23, 1992, Boris Yeltsin signed a Presidential decree: "On the Removal of Restrictive Classifications on Legislative and Other Acts That Served as the Basis for Mass Persecutions and Violations of Human Rights." That decree brought Solzhenitsyn's enormous secret file into the public domain. The book includes real treasures that perfectly display the paranoia and the stupidity of the Politburo members in their own voices. As Scammell's excellent introduction makes clear, the documents are a window on the remarkable attention that the Kremlin leaders paid to Solzhenitsyn: no one knew better than they did just how potentially damaging his writing could be to their hold on power. While the world spoke of the Soviet Union as a stable superpower, Solzhenitsyn wrote of the regime's wretched history and its inherent instability. In 1964, Leonid Brezhnev and his circle saw the threat posed by the novella "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich," and tried to throw out of office the man who had sanctioned its publication—Nikita Khrushchev. In Scammell's book, Brezhnev's men are overheard struggling, year after year, with the problem of what to do with Solzhenitsyn: Can he be seduced? Silenced? Can we win with propaganda or must he be imprisoned?

Taken as a whole, these documents have everything you look for in a Russian novel, from the moral daring of the hero in Lermontov to the comic striving of the bureaucrat in Gogol. The paper trail shows us every unseemly detail of the leadership's hamfisted brutality, including the K.G.B.'s use of Solzhenitsyn's first wife to manipulate him. Above all, we see and hear the author in his most unguarded moments. He never disappoints. One of the earliest documents in the collection, a 1965 wiretap of a conversation in a Moscow apartment, is among the most revealing. At a time when the height of dissent would have been a call for a reformed socialism (the Prague Spring was still three years off), Solzhenitsyn goes on, in his table talk, about the "serpent" Lenin, "a man totally without principles." Moreover, he seems decades ahead of his time as he talks about the Soviet regime, its detachment, its perishability:

> This is a government without prospects. They have no conveyor belts connecting them to ideology, or the masses, or the economy, or foreign policy, or to the world communist movement—nothing. The levers to all the conveyor belts have broken down and don't function. They can decide all they want sitting at their desks. Yet it's clear at once that it's not working. You see? Honestly, I have that impression. They're paralyzed.

And not only that. Solzhenitsyn, supposedly an ardent Russian nationalist, loath to give up an inch of imperial territory, rails at length about the inevitable and rightful crackup of the Soviet Union:

> I'm amazed that liberal Russian people don't understand that we have to separate from the republics. . . . I tell them it's all over for the Ukraine, it has to go. . . . But how could there be any question about the Caucasus, the Baltics! On the very first day, if you want—whoever wants to leave, for God's sake, do so!

In these documents we hear the Politburo members over and over again acting as literary critics and police-

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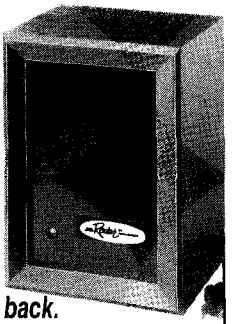

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men—alternating between the impulses of interpretation and of punishment. They bully and twit Solzhenitsyn in every way possible and none of it—absolutely none of it—dissuades him.

People in both the West and in Russia find Solzhenitsyn annoying because he has at his core a quality that has no place in polite discourse: he is absolutely uncompromising. The Politburo found that quality not only annoying but frightening. Here is Solzhenitsyn in 1971, after an official search of his dacha, writing to the K.G.B. chairman, Yuri Andropov:

> For many years I have borne in silence the lawlessness of your employees: the inspection of all my correspondence, the confiscation of half of it, the tracking down of my correspondents, their persecution at work and by state agencies, the spying around my house, the shadowing of visitors, the tapping of telephone conversations, the drilling of holes in ceilings, the placing of recording apparatus in my city apartment and at my cottage, and a persistent slander campaign against me from the platforms of lecture halls when they are put at the disposal of officials from your ministry.
>
> But after the raid yesterday, I will no longer be silent.

In 1974, three years after the secret police had literally unearthed a hidden copy of "The Gulag Archipelago," Solzhenitsyn's most dangerous work and his masterpiece, Andropov persuaded the leadership to hustle the author onto a plane bound for Frankfurt. The harassment, however, did not end there. The K.G.B.'s interest in him never really faded. Agents abroad kept Moscow informed of his activities and tried to hound him and discredit him as an irrelevant crank. The documents prove what should never have been in doubt: there is no greater story of human dignity in this century than that of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. It is not his fault that his most important books—and days—are behind him. To mock him is to mock the uncommon, the rare appearance of the superior and necessary man. ♦

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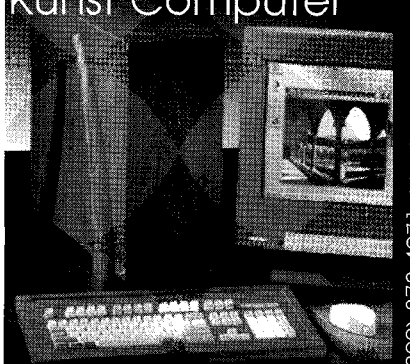

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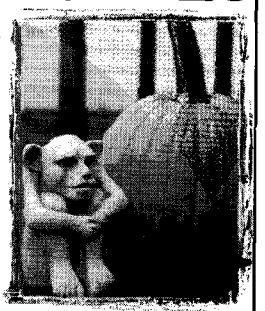

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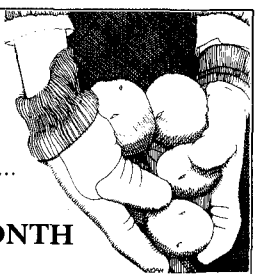

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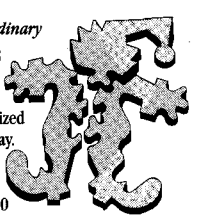

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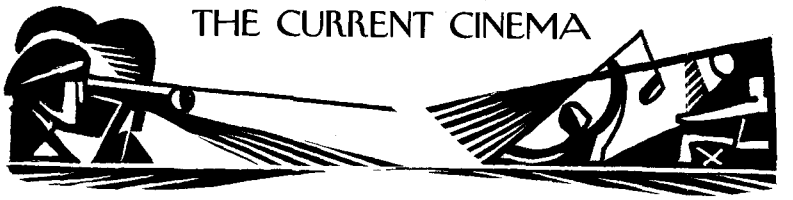


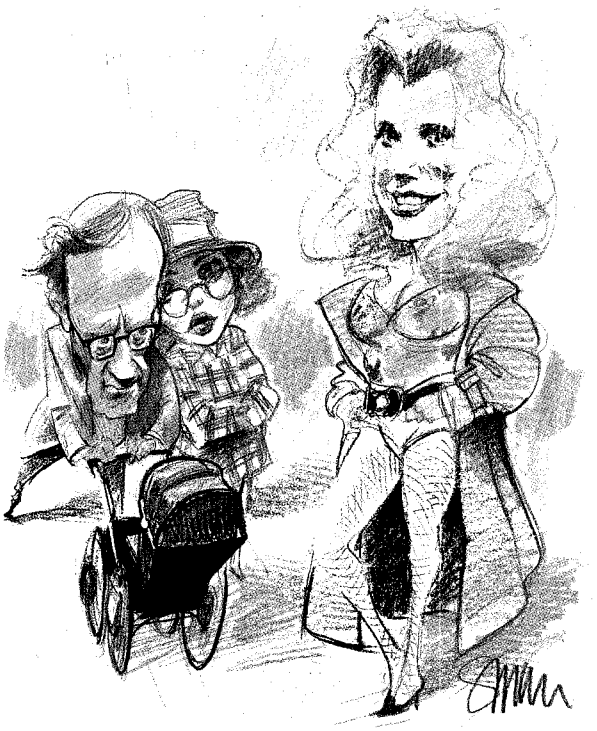
SCARLET WOMEN

Mira Sorvino takes on Woody Allen, and Demi Moore takes out Hawthorne.

BY ANTHONY LANE

THE new Woody Allen picture, "Mighty Aphrodite," stars Woody Allen as Lenny Weinrib. Lenny is a middle-aged New Yorker, a sportswriter by trade, although his principal task, as the leading figure in a Woody Allen film, is to stalk around wearing a lot of brown. John Cusack was fairly tweedy in "Bullets Over Broadway," and Allen himself looked foxed and faded in "Husbands and Wives," but "Mighty Aphrodite" outbrowns them both. Lenny is a fallen leaf on legs, and the cinematographer, Carlo DiPalma, darkens and dampens the city air around him; you can't tell where human moodiness ends and the weather begins. Lenny's outlook is sunny enough at the start of the movie, when he and his wife, Amanda (Helena Bonham Carter), adopt a child, but gradually the marriage wilts, and Lenny begins to muse on his son's origins. He goes in search of the real mother, and winds up, to his horror, standing at the door of a hooker and porn actress named Linda Ash—otherwise known, in the more specialized reaches of the movie business, as Judy Cum.

Up to this point, most of "Mighty Aphrodite" seems spindly and dry. It's easy to forget how offhanded a dramatist Allen can be. What might have been major themes of this picture—Lenny's job, his rapport with Amanda—are, you realize, little more than minor staging posts in the progress of the plot. Even the adopted boy barely registers; in the opening scenes, he is cooed over, but soon he takes a back seat—literally, as a small figure glimpsed in the rear of a car while his parents bicker up front. Everything changes when Linda Ash opens her door and says, "Hello? Are you my three-o'clock?" She thinks that Lenny is just another nervous trick; for his part, he never tells her that he is raising her unwanted child. The story thrives on this lovely pact of misunderstanding, and suddenly "Mighty Aphrodite" blooms into natural comedy—it starts making sense. What follows is an Upper East Side variation on "Pygmalion": trying hard to remain platonic, Lenny befriends Linda and slowly molds her into the kind of mother he thinks his son deserves.



And baby makes four: Woody Allen, Helena Bonham Carter, and Mira Sorvino in "Mighty Aphrodite."

DAVID SMALL

Linda is played by Mira Sorvino, and it's a perfect fit: she squeezes into the role as if it were a pair of hot pants. In

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Woody Allen's universe, of course, a whore without a heart of gold is unthinkable. What is remarkable about Sorvino is not just the spin that she puts on her lines but her refusal to let the character lie still and purr as a creature of fantasy. A tower of high heels and tiny skirts, a collector of phallic knickknacks for her apartment, Linda shocks Lenny with a résumé of her movie career (her credits include "The Enchanted Pussy," which sounds like a Hanna-Barbera classic) and with the brazenness of her approach: "Pull!" she exclaims, merrily fluttering her hands as he tangles with the fastenings on her blouse. Allen, as you would expect, crams the scene with aghast twitches and breathy comebacks, but, for once, you don't even look at his side of the frame; Sorvino is too much fun to miss. She eases the contrivance of "Mighty Aphrodite," the faintly pinched and plaintive tone that creeps in from time to time. (It's good to hear a touch of profanity in a Woody Allen script: when Linda says, brightly, "I feel I owe you a great fuck," her dirty mouth is a blast of fresh air.) Sorvino's command of the movie is almost embarrassing; she makes everyone else look listless and indifferent to life. Her character gets more out of a skin flick, or a sandwich, than the chic, boring Amanda gets out of running an art gallery downtown.

You could argue that Sorvino is retreading the ground already covered so gaily by Jennifer Tilly in "Bullets Over Broadway." But Tilly gave us a caricature, and her yowling tones were borrowed straight from Judy Holliday, whereas Sorvino starts with a hint of Miss Piggy, adds a squeak of Minnie Mouse, and takes it from there. Though indubitably dumb and blonde, Linda is not simply a dumb blonde; the dumbness is a badge of honor. Sorvino's performance defies Woody Allen's intellectual snobbery, his habit of making fun of stupid people. Starting with "Love and Death," and the character who couldn't write his own name on the ground with a stick, you can trace the mockery through his films all the way up to "Mighty Aphrodite," in which Lenny, anxious to make an honest woman of Linda, sets her up with a guy named Kevin (Michael Rapaport) because he figures they're both brainless. It's quite funny that Kevin, a budding boxer, doesn't know his left from his right, but I could sense Allen's wit muscling the poor guy against the ropes, giving him no chance, laying him flat with a punch line.

Allen is far too clever not to know that he's being cruel, and he has the good grace to admonish himself. Throughout the movie, we see a Greek chorus, led by F. Murray Abraham and Olympia Dukakis, chanting words of wisdom in a crumbling amphitheatre. Lines of ersatz Sophocles mix with a-cappella songs and jokes about psychotherapists, all of which is designed to help Lenny's cause. "He's playing God!" cries Abraham, who occasionally pops up in New York to offer Lenny moral advice. These are useful conceits, but I couldn't help thinking of the Bogart figure who prowled through "Play It Again, Sam," and of all the mock-epic turns that litter Allen's early movies and monologues. "Mighty Aphrodite" is his most self-referential picture to date, in miniature details as well as in cosmic worries: the paranoia about brown drinking water, for instance, dates back to "Manhattan," and there's a strong whiff of déjà vu in Lenny's nerdish terror of a thug. "This guy's gonna put me into twenty-seven separate Mason jars," he says, a nearly exact quotation from Allen's 1970 humor piece "A Look at Organized Crime."

This revisiting of old territory, including the haunting of old jokes, doesn't mean that Allen is running out of ideas; if anything, it's rather staunch and comforting. How many directors in America have turned themselves into one-man traditions? "Mighty Aphrodite" is not one of Allen's best movies: there are patches where it stumbles and flaps instead of coasting along, and, as in "Manhattan Murder Mystery," Woody appears to have dreamed up half a dozen endings and then tried to use them all. But when the picture does work—most often in the scenes between Allen and Sorvino—you find yourself sighing with relief at its lightness of heart: at the courteous, inquiring glide of DiPalma's camera as it rounds the corner of a boxing ring, or the wall of a gallery, in search of kisses and good conversation; at the dexterity with which the film can slide toward neurosis, then turn on a dime and skate off in the opposite direction. "At my age, if I made love to you they'd have to put me on a respirator," Lenny complains. It's a joke, of sorts, but Linda's laugh is rough

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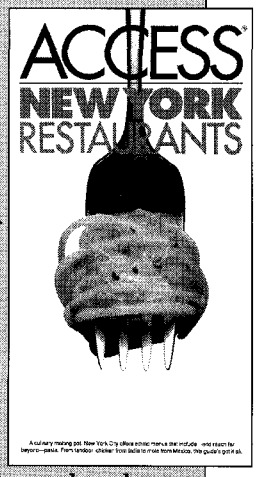

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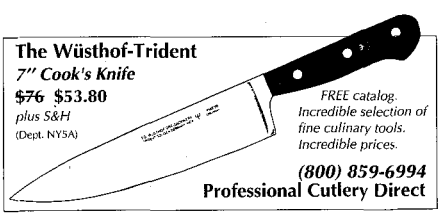

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with scorn. "Ha!" she replies. She's heard it all before, and so have we.

WHAT is the point of Demi Moore? It's not that I don't get her; I simply can't see what's there for the getting. I suspect that people revere the sheer steely professionalism that has propelled her into the first rank of fame; they react to her strategic skills, in other words, rather than to any particular artistry. This may be standard practice in politics—we tend to elect those who run a smart campaign, hardly bothering to wonder whether they are fit for office—but it is a curious sign of the times that the practice has infected even our moviegoing. Like many veteran politicians, Demi Moore seems to have lost the fizz that made her ambition rise in the first place. The rasp of her voice used to remind me of Veronica Lake; now I just want to chuck throat lozenges at the screen. Demi was funny and sexy in "About Last Night . . . ," casually naked and snapping greedily at the David Mamet dialogue; these days, she looks a little glum—proof that celebrity is no laughing matter—and the sighting of her nudity has become a regular national event, like the launch of the space shuttle. If she completes a successful docking, so much the better.

Moore has now taken it upon herself to assume one of the canonical American roles: she plays Hester Prynne in the new movie adaptation of "The Scarlet Letter." Roland Joffé's film is, in the words of the opening credits, "freely adapted from the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne," in the same way that methane is freely adapted from cows. So little of the book is left intact that you ask yourself why Joffé and his screenwriter, Douglas Day Stewart, didn't junk the whole thing and compose their own story from scratch. If you want your Puritan minister to go skinny-dipping, your heroine and her black maid to stand around dripping in bathtubs, your scalp-hungry Indians to attack in the final reel, your lovers to slake their desires on top of what appears to be a hundred-weight of granola, and your forest to resemble a commercial for toilet freshener—if, in short, you want to make a seventeenth-century version of "The Enchanted Pussy"—then what's the point of traducing poor old Hawthorne?

The casting is a catalogue of wrong calls. Gary Oldman plays the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale with ink on his face, lust in his loins, and a wavering Scottish accent. Robert Duvall's Chillingworth has vocal problems of his own as he struggles to wrap his tongue around English vowels. Under a better director, Duvall could have been ideal for the "refined cruelty" and "dark and self-relying intelligence" that Hawthorne saw in the character, but, apart from one creepy moment in Hester's house, when he wipes her face with a tenderness that toughens into rage, he is given no opportunity to dig around in that darkness. To be fair, I did enjoy his open-air scenes among the Indians. Chillingworth is taken prisoner by the fearsome Tarrantine tribe, presumably ruled by Chief Reservoir Dog, and we are faced with the unusual sight of one of our most distinguished actors dancing about with a dead, disembowelled, and rather surprised-looking deer on his head. Keeps the ears warm, I guess.

What kind of movie did Roland Joffé have in mind? Does he think of "The Scarlet Letter" as a period piece at all? The dialogue is no help. At first, Hester impresses the elders with her scholarship. "Thou canst quote the Scriptures!" one of them says approvingly. Fair enough, but by the last reel everyone has sloughed off the archaisms to reveal a somewhat livelier vocabulary. Hester, defending herself from a rapist, grabs what looks like a sawed-off musket, points it at her attacker, and shouts, "You bastard—get out!" There's something equally charming in her exchanges with Dimmesdale: learned discussions of Milton's "Comus" ("Yes, I've read it") make way for the prime-time directness of "Arthur, thank God you're here!"

I don't object to films that take liberties, but a film that is actually imprisoned by those liberties seems a waste of time. Joffé's stabs at violence and mysticism, like Demi Moore's urgent need to be arousing at all times, serve only to trap "The Scarlet Letter" in visual conventions that are twice as drab and restrictive as the Puritan citizens whose principles the film finds so savagely absurd. The irony is that the novel itself could have given Joffé what he wanted. Just think of its majestic opening: Hester on the scaffold, the crowd (and the reader) unaware that the minister addressing her is her former lover and that the strange figure on the fringe of the crowd is her husband, long believed dead. There is more suspense, more dramatic torque, in one page of Hawthorne's heart-racked ruminations on the Christian conscience than in all Demi Moore's woodland gallops and horizontal barn dancing. Thou hast to be kidding. ♦

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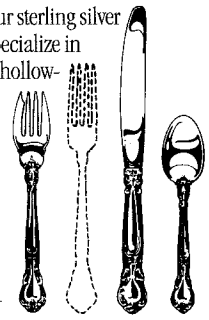

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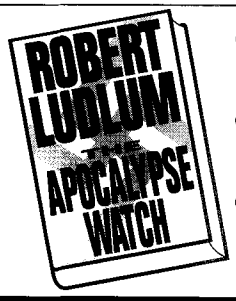

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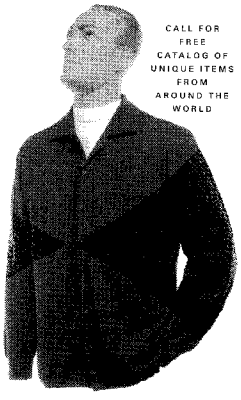

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LATE HARVEST

New works by Elliott Carter, the neoclassical modernist.

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

THIRTY years ago, when Elliott Carter was a boy in his mid-fifties, he seemed to have reached the settled creativity of a master. New works would appear every three years or so, and they would always be big instrumental fabrications: orchestral pieces and string quartets. The pattern began to change when he was in his late sixties, and now, at the age of eighty-six, he's writing all kinds of things, and quickly: songs and brilliant fizzles—such as, earlier this year, a "Figment" for cello, to join a whole bunch of pieces for soloists or small groups—as well as the continuing, but accelerated, output of large-scale symphonic and chamber pieces. Just within the past few months, he's had three large new works performed, making altogether about an hour of music: "Of Challenge and of Love," a song cycle for soprano and piano to poems by John Hollander; "Adagio Tenebroso," for orchestra; and his Fifth String Quartet.

The composer at eighty-six: "One wants to catch the lived present."

BEN VERVAAIK

What's also changed since the sixties is that his premières are now much more likely to be taking place in Europe than here. The major recent exception was his orchestral "Partita," introduced last year by the Chicago Symphony (and recorded by it on Teldec). While that lively score has yet to be taken up by another orchestra in this country, it's been done by several in Europe and Canada, including, earlier this month, the Concertgebouw under David Robertson. Of this year's three major new works, the song cycle was performed by Lucy Shelton and John Constable at the Aldeburgh Festival, "Adagio Tenebroso" by the BBC Symphony under Andrew Davis at the London Proms, and the quartet by the Arditti Quartet in Antwerp. All is not lost, though. The orchestra piece and the quartet will be given soon in New York by the original artists: the former at Carnegie Hall on October 25th, the latter at Alice Tully Hall on November 16th. The song cycle will be heard in March.

"Adagio Tenebroso" is an almost shocking thing for Mr. Carter to have produced at his age. It's slow. As in the case of "Partita," Mr. Carter has explained that the music follows the course of a bubble bobbing over the world of human existence, an image he found in a Latin poem by Richard Crashaw: "I am a flower of air . . . nature's golden joke, its rambling tale, its brief dream, pride of trifles and grief, sweet and learned vanity, daughter of golden perfidy, and parent of the ready smile." The humor, instability, and delightfulness of this image were all present in "Partita," but in its succes-

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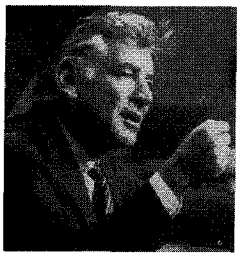

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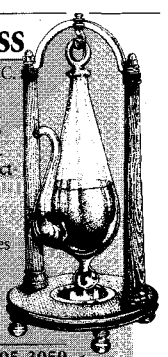

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sor, the composer has said, the bubble is "flying over the sadder parts of life"—the grief more than the trifles. However, the characteristic objectivity of his music remains. The bubble is a floating eye, a floating I, from which we seem to be observing possibilities of sadness as these are announced by sustained chords and slow, broken melodies. We can't experience the music as a voice expressing melancholy, partly because the simultaneous contrasted rhythms (often threes against fours or twos) rule out that sense of a single pulse which music needs if it is to appear voicelike. Maybe this is what Mr. Carter was referring to when he said to me earlier this year that "one wants to catch the lived present and the presence of the present—which immediately eliminates the weepy side of Brahms."

Also, the music's discontinuity stops it from being univocal, and its clarity makes even its inspection of sadness bracing. Particularly in the early part of the piece, Mr. Carter moves through—or, rather, glides over—chords that are widely spaced (there might be just three or four notes within a span of five octaves or more) and often pure-colored, whether for woodwinds, brass, or strings. What we're exposed to isn't a sad personality but a sad landscape, as in Varèse's "Déserts," with which "Adagio Tenebroso" shares something in matters of space, time, and coloring. Such evidence of a continuing zest for the golden age of modernism is typical of Mr. Carter, and is part of what gives each new piece of his a tonic force. But equally typical is his ongoing adherence to the silver rules of neoclassicism, with regard not only to craftsmanship but even to details of design, especially occasional open fifths, which connect with the music he was writing half a century ago, and with Copland's of the same period.

Much less evocative of the past is his sudden and strange recourse to the thematic principle, though not to the thematic principle as we understand it from Beethoven. There's no development of themes, because there's no process, as there can't be any in music that's in its essence discontinuous and contrary-stranded. We understand "theme" because we hear the same melodic shape—most notably a rising sixth, from C to A on the treble staff—sounding repeatedly. But it isn't going anywhere. Each time it comes, it comes in a sharply different context: as a lone feature in the violins (though presaged by oboes as a chord), as the start of an oboe tune that falters, as a prize seized rather peremptorily by the violins, as a new beginning on the oboe, and so on. For a theme, it seems a slightly embarrassing parcel, and the deliberate failure to achieve anything with it becomes another success in the work's survey of the vanity of human ambitions.

After a climax about a third of the way through, the music begins to project longer melodies, chiefly for brass. ("Partita" featured mostly woodwind solos; the third, and final, installment of the "bubble symphony"—three works to make one hyper-work—will bring string soloists forward.) Tension builds toward the principal climax as tension builds within a glacier, and the iceberg that breaks off is a curious reminiscence of Bach's "Musical Offering," played by a solo double bass. From this point, the music is moving into quiescence, which it achieves in a luminous cadence.

MR. CARTER'S Fifth Quartet has a few aspects in common with "Adagio Tenebroso," including the melodic gestures repeated in new circumstances, as well as other things more generally characteristic of him: the rhythms in conflict; the different imaginary chords that are explored in the musical shapes, and that convey both wholeness and friction; and the objectivity. It brings, though, a return to speed. Of twelve connected sections, only two are altogether slow: a "Lento espressivo" that is a smooth extent of rich, changing chords (similar to some passages of harmonic exploration in the orchestra piece), and an "Adagio sereno" that appears to be playing out the same game, but now entirely in harmonics, and quietly. This section incorporates a memorial piece that has already been performed a good deal, by the Kronos Quartet and others.

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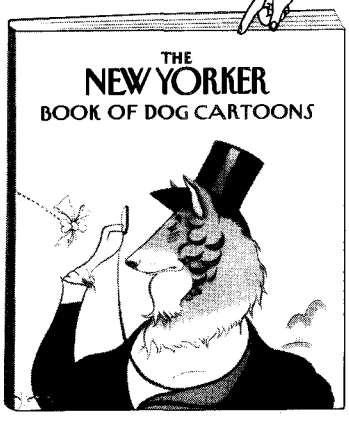

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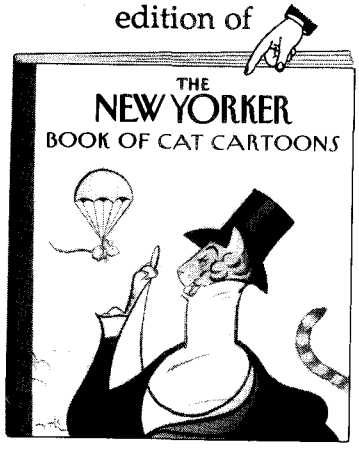

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quick, whether rushing, energetic, or playful, and these somewhat sporting qualities pervade the music as much as they did "Partita." Mr. Carter's smart tactic is to create a work that presents itself as a rehearsal. In his preface to the score he writes, "One of the fascinations of attending rehearsals of chamber music, when excellent players try out fragments of what they later will play in the ensemble, then play it, and then stop abruptly to discuss how to improve it, is that this pattern is so similar to our inner experience of forming, ordering, focusing, and bringing to fruition, and then dismissing our feelings and ideas." So the six main sections are all preceded by passages of tryout or reprise, where the players are often heard alone. At the beginning, for instance, the leader plays quadruple-stopped chords out of which the music explodes, rather in the manner of Stravinsky's Violin Concerto, except that the explosion is initially spasmodic. There are intimations of the jolts and the legato melodies to come in the immediately following "Giocoso"; there are hints, too, already of the slow sections; and all the while the poor second violin is stuck on its bottom note, which it keeps repeating in exasperated pizzicatos. There is indeed the impression of catching music in preparation—a private moment—and the scheme makes it possible for Mr. Carter to let us in on his own preparations: his extrapolation from a chord or a gesture. Of course, there's an aspect of sly counterfeit going on here. After all, the "rehearsal" is in fact the work; the "sketch" is the finished article. But the sense of things improvised, spun on the moment—in company with things more worked on, and briskly diverse—makes this a happy divertimento in Mr. Carter's quartet career, and a piece that keeps faith with his Ivesian-democratic notion of the quartet as a group of bustling individuals. ♦

GEOPOLITICAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Times*]

An article on May 7 about the Central Asian lands whose names end in "stan" referred incorrectly to Kafiristan. It is the former name of a region of northeastern Afghanistan, not an imaginary place invented by Rudyard Kipling.

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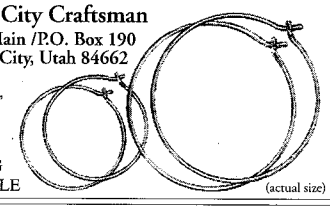
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HUNGER ARTIST

BY DAVID IVES

A retrospective of my work at the age of twenty is, in my opinion, just slightly premature.—*Kate Moss, quoted in "Kate," a new book of photographs of the model.*

JANUARY 20. Usual creative agony at the Calvin Klein shoot. The eternal problems of Truth and Composition. Yet ultimately I felt I had *become* that pair of wide-leg, button-fly, stonewashed jeans. I was like one of van Gogh's cypress trees. (Did Vincent go through this? Did Vincent have to weigh himself four times a day? Did Vincent like pasta Alfredo as much as I do?)

JANUARY 21. Lunch today with a guy named Vincent, and *he liked mushroom burgers, too.* Is that cosmic? I must explore this in my work—fate, destiny. Maybe at the *Vogue* shoot.

JANUARY 23. Faxed the Pope *personally*, asking if I might pose hanging from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. My agent had already inquired and got a shirty letter from some Fascist in the Swiss Guards. (Love those uniforms, though. So Carnaby Street.) Should send a copy of "Kate" in case the Vatican Library hasn't got one yet. I wonder if Michelangelo ever weighed a hundred and fifteen pounds.

JANUARY 24. Article today says I'm so thin I should be paid by the Mexican government to be homecoming queen on the Day of the Dead. Was this a compliment? Six kosher franks for lunch. *I must stop this.*

JANUARY 26. Too many entries about eatables. Have resolved to devote tomorrow's entry *solely* to philosophical questions concerning the nature of Art.

JANUARY 27.

JANUARY 28. If I go totally platinum, will I still be Kate Moss? Does my contract say I have to be Kate Moss? Did Picasso go through this when he went from blue to pink? Or was it vice versa?

JANUARY 29. Still no response from the Pope. Should I have written in Latin?

JANUARY 30. New article compares me to a figure in a Munch painting. At last the critics begin to *understand* me. Thelonious Munch has been a *huge* influence! Didn't know he painted, though. I should write to him! Maybe we can collaborate!

JANUARY 31. Just discovered that Thelonious Munch is *dead.* Tragic!

FEBRUARY 2. Decided to let Pollock influence me at today's shoot, and dislocated a shoulder. This is what comes of changing one's style in midstream. Integrity, Kate. Challenge the bourgeoisie.

FEBRUARY 3. Still nothing from John Paul II.

FEBRUARY 4. Bitter cold. No inspiration. Utter futility. I have forgotten how to create! Assuaged my despair by gnawing on a used Domino's Pizza box. Pepperoni, I think.

FEBRUARY 5. A pimple, as I feared. Damn, damn, damn this fatal addiction to food! It is my absinthe, my drug, my downfall, and now it is the cause of a *zit* the size of *Mt. Edna.* Vincent did *not* go through this in painting a self-portrait, as he could *leave the zits out.* He could also spend a year on a self-portrait. I must bare my soul to the camera in hundreds of poses a *day.* Swordfish for lunch with green beans.

FEBRUARY 6. *Vogue* wants to go with the pimple. They say it's more *real*, more *actual*, and want to emphasize it with makeup. I agreed to degrade myself for my art and an extra fifty thou. I said the pimple was like a livid white area on a bright-red Rothko. They all said *Yes!* It *was!* I suggested that we shoot a few rolls of me popping it. They said that might be too much. My struggle with the Philistines goes on. (P.S.: Which Phyllis are they named after? Must check, lest I embarrass myself in conversation.)

ROBERT MELEE

FEBRUARY 7. Response from the Pope today: a signed picture of himself in the most fabulous outfit. Does this mean yes? Will he let me try it on?

FEBRUARY 8. Scaasi once said to me, "Kate, *you think too much.*" And it's true. Very bad for my work. I must be more instinctual. I must be a raw nerve, open to the camera. I must change my shampoo. (Didn't Rilke say that?) ♦

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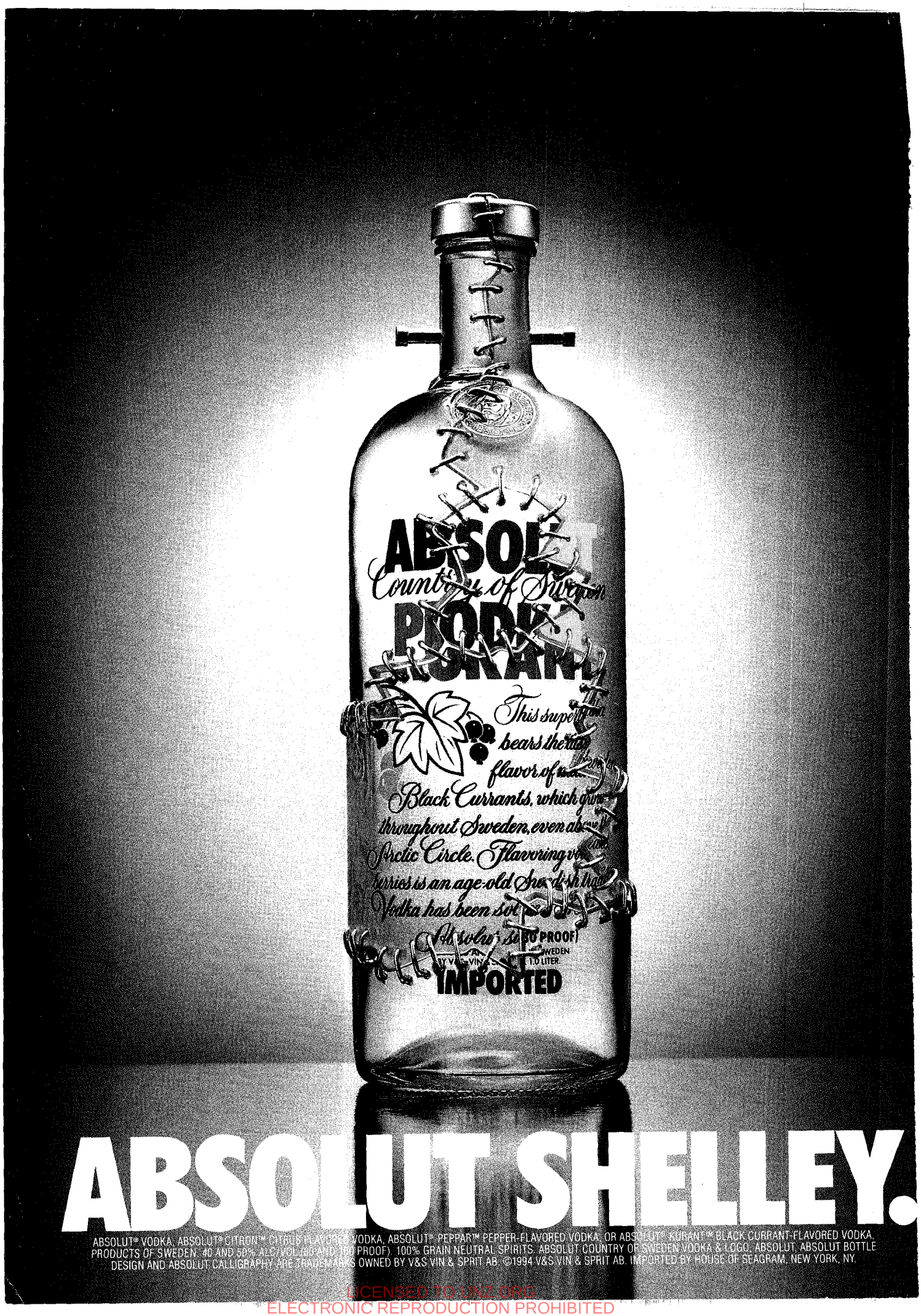

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